

Monday August 24 1998

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Ankara FF 10
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Chicago US\$ 1.00
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Copenhagen DK 10
Dhaka FF 10
Doha FF 10
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Frankfurt DM 10
Geneva S 10
Hankow FF 10
Harbin FF 10
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Oman FF 10
Osaka FF 10
Paris FF 10
Rangoon FF 10
Riyadh FF 10
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Sofia FF 10
Tehran FF 10
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Yokohama FF 10

The Guardian

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INTERNATIONAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

In the 12-page sports section

Villa show there is life after Yorke

With the Quick Crossword

Tony Benn discusses why:

Clinton needs candid friends

Comment, page 8

Larry Elliott on:

Russia's great leap to chaos

Finance, page 12

Unemployed offered jobs in the classroom

John Carvel
Education Editor

A PLAN to put the unemployed to work as classroom assistants to help hard-pressed teachers prepare lessons and give more individual attention to children as they learn to read will be launched today by Peter Hain, the education minister for Wales.

The scheme is designed to achieve the double bonus of improving pupils' literacy and reducing unemployment numbers. But the teacher unions fear it could provide a powerful financial incentive

for schools to take on staff who may not be best suited to the job.

The assistants would be recruited under the New Deal programme for helping the jobless back into work with subsidies of up to £75 a week for employers willing to hire staff from among the long-term unemployed.

The scheme is to be piloted in Wales from early next year and the Government will see how well it works before extending it elsewhere.

Mr Hain said it would provide "a great opportunity for youngsters and adults who have been written off into a lifetime of despair without work. Many of those coming

into the New Deal are very able, but their skills have been wasted."

The new classroom assistants would not be foisted on schools. Heads and governors would be free to decide whether to take part and there would be rules stopping them substituting the subsidised New Deal recruits for existing classroom assistants, teachers or nursery nurses.

"People will only be recommended as suitable for schools after they have been interviewed by the Employment Service and after appropriate checks on their background. Even then they will only be taken on after an interview by headteachers."

The assistants would be especially useful in helping with reading schemes. "That can be part of the Government's drive to upgrade literacy skills or be deployed to help hard-pressed teachers clearing up, preparing for lessons or giving pupils individual attention. Some assistants may wish to go on to pursue full-time teacher training."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, said he feared the scheme could degenerate into a "cheap and nasty" system for cutting school budgets.

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union

of Teachers, said he supported the New Deal policy for tackling unemployment. "But if these young people are going to command respect in the profession, they will need appropriate training. You can't just take people off the dole and assume they are all right to work in the classroom," he said.

Peter Smith, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said there should be no prejudice against recruiting the unemployed, but the paramount factor for people working with children should be quality.

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said

schools were crying out for more classroom assistants and the New Deal scheme could be a good way of finding them as long as the new recruits could demonstrate that they could acquire the necessary skills.

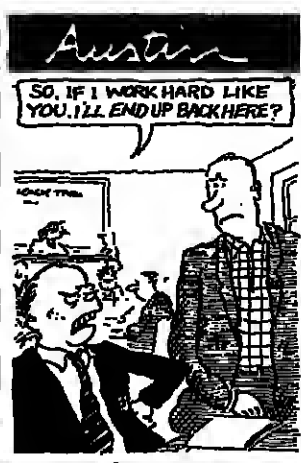
Schools will get a subsidy of £50 a week and a £750 training grant for taking on a New Deal recruit aged 18-24, and £75 a week for those over 25. The subsidies will be payable for six months.

A big increase in numbers of classroom assistants over the last few years has helped to maintain adult-pupil ratios during a period of swelling class sizes.

From 1992 to 1997 the num-

ber of teachers in England and Wales went up by 2 per cent to 408,000, but the number of pupils rose by 8 per cent. The strain was eased by a 40 per cent increase in lower-paid non-teaching staff — including classroom assistants and nursery nurses — which increased from 35,000 to 133,000.

As a result the pupil-adult ratio in primary schools in England fell from 18.6 in 1992 to 18.0 in 1997. An education white paper said last year that many teaching assistants had little or no training. "We believe that with appropriate training they could make an enhanced contribution," the Government said.



US raid target 'valid'

Richard Norton-Taylor,
Ed Vulliamy and Mike White

THE Government claimed yesterday it had independent evidence that Osama bin Laden, the Saudi dissident millionaire, has been conspiring to achieve a chemical and biological weapons capability to sustain an international campaign of terrorism.

In the face of growing concern about the United States' choice of targets for last week's retaliatory cruise missile attack, the Defence Secretary, George Robertson, said Whitehall had also acquired "independent evidence" that Mr Bin Laden was involved in the attacks on US embassies in east Africa.

His comments came as the United States justified its bombing raid on Sudan — as well as that in Afghanistan — by insisting the Shifa pharmaceutical plant had a role in producing chemical weapons for international terrorism.

The US national security adviser, Sandy Berger, said yesterday that the US had "physical evidence" that the Shifa plant was making ingredients for VX nerve gas.

Other US officials echoed the secretary of state's remarks on the bombing that "unfortunately, this is the war of the future", suggesting further strikes will follow. And her under secretary, Thomas Pickering, promised: "We are in this for the long haul."

Mr Robertson's stance startled some leftwing critics. He said that if British interests had been attacked in that way, the Labour government would retaliate in the same way — despite complaints from Moscow and the Islamic world that Washington should have taken its case to the United Nations.

"We have given the same indications and the same warnings to international terrorists who would threaten our embassies that the consequences would be dire on them if they did it," he declared.

Labour critics, who are de-

manding a recall of parliament to discuss the crisis, also claim that the Foreign Office was not consulted before Tony Blair gave his backing to President Bill Clinton's action — and that Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, is now conspicuous by his silence. Instead Mr Robertson argued the Prime Minister's case on radio and TV.

Underpinning Mr Blair's unquestioning support for the US missile strike on a Sudanese factory — an innocent pharmaceutical plant, according to some British experts — he insisted that Washington had "absolutely compelling evidence" that it had been part of the Bin Laden programme to "develop a capacity" to manufacture chemical and biological weapons.

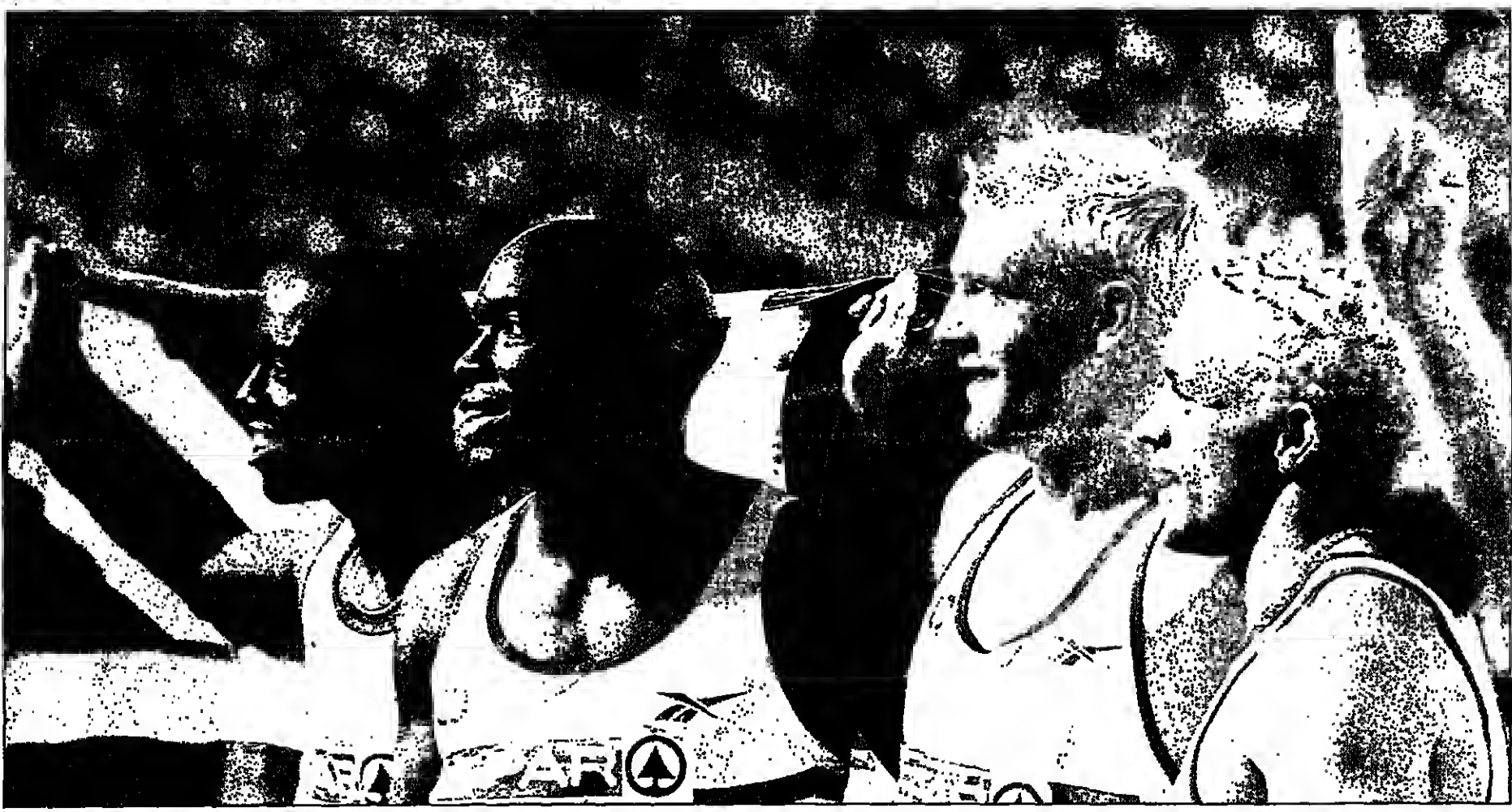
"We have independent evidence ourselves that Bin Laden and others were seeking to acquire chemical and biological weapons in order to prosecute the kind of campaign that we know they were involved in," he told BBC Radio 4's The World This Weekend and other interviewers.

To many people, as we have seen in Iraq, it is not easy to distinguish between an ordinary chemical or pharmaceutical plant and the elements that are required to produce the precursor chemicals that can make up the toxins that can be used against civil populations.

He added: "But the Americans have that convincing evidence and that led them to make the attack that they did". It is not clear whether he has seen the products of US intelligence or is relying on assurances from his US counterpart, William Cohen.

Tony Benn, the Labour ex-cabinet minister who strongly criticises the Government's support for the US attacks in an article in today's Guardian, said last night: "The overwhelming majority of evidence now available... indicates that there were no chemical weapons being made in the Sudan."

Terror threat to US and Israel, page 4; Tony Benn, page 5; Letters, page 9



The 4x400 metre relay team — Mark Hyton (left), Mark Richardson, Iwan Thomas and Jamie Baulch — celebrate their victory as Britain topped the medals table with nine golds in the European Championships in Budapest yesterday. Triumph in Budapest, Sport, pages 22 and 23

Shock purge by Yeltsin

Russia in disarray after second set of sackings in five months

James Meek in Moscow

PRESIDENT Boris Yeltsin yesterday sacked his entire government for the second time in five months and brought back the man he fired, Victor Chernomyrdin, as prime minister.

Mr Yeltsin, who normally speaks on radio or television to announce sudden dismissals, was not heard or seen, prompting intense speculation over how and why he had decided to replace the young Sergei Kiriyenko with the man widely thought to have got Russia into its current financial mess.

"This decision lacks any logic," said parliamentary leftist Nikolai Ryzhkov. "When Yeltsin sacked Chernomyrdin five months ago, he sacked him for a reason."

Mr Chernomyrdin will now have to recruit ministers and be confirmed in office by a sceptical parliament, creating a fresh delay in tackling a financial crisis that shows every sign of worsening in the coming days.

Mr Kiriyenko, a 36-year-old banker from Nizhny Novgorod, never had a political base

in parliament, which disliked his political liberalism, and was regarded with suspicion by the powerful businessmen and regional leaders who control much of Russia's wealth, who feared he might implement laws forcing them to pay tax or go bankrupt.

It was pressure from these figures and the media they control which brought Mr Kiriyenko down and promoted the return of Mr Chernomyrdin, who is more accommodating to Russia's special interest elites.

There was no popular pressure on Mr Kiriyenko to quit. Most ordinary Russians saw little difference between the policies he and Mr Chernomyrdin carried out, although the younger man was admired for his articulacy and intellect.

The catalyst for Mr Kiriyenko's downfall was Moody's devaluation of the rouble and debt default, which occurred despite his success in July in persuading the IMF to grant Russia an emergency loan.

All week Mr Chernomyrdin stomped angrily through the corridors of power, denouncing the Kiriyenko government and holding consultations with politicians and



Victor Chernomyrdin: Back after five months

business leaders. He now becomes Mr Yeltsin's natural successor, and acting head of state if the president is incapacitated.

Although Mr Yeltsin cast him out of the prime ministerial chair in March with an enigmatic commission to "prepare for presidential elections", and Mr Chernomyrdin was making plans to run in 2000, few fancied the unpopular apparatchik's chances without the power base of the government and its patronage.

Last night Mr Kiriyenko emerged from the govern-

ment White House with a political ally, deputy premier Boris Nemtsov, to bid a strange farewell to a group of unpaid cohabiters who maintain permanent protest camp outside the building and whose plastic helmets beating against the cobbles have been a reminder of the problems of the Russia beyond Moscow.

Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov, leader of the largest opposition group in parliament, accused Mr Yeltsin of operating back to front by appointing a new prime minister without consulting parliament, and repeated his demands for a complete change of economic course.

Vladimir Lukin, of the liberal Yabloko party, said the new appointment testified to a "profound confusion and indecisiveness" in the executive.

Until Mr Yeltsin comes up with the satisfactory explanation for his latest actions, there is bound to be doubt as to how far he wanted to bring the former premier back and how far he was bullied into doing it by his entourage. In just over a week's time, the West will have a chance to find out at first hand when Bill Clinton visits Moscow.

Reshuffle stacks deck, page 5; Markets breeze, page 11; Great leap to chaos, page 12

Inside

Britain
Tony Blair, who is to visit Northern Ireland, has plans to counter terrorism that will avoid the need to recall Parliament.

5

World News
A Neapolitan cardinal is under investigation for crimes including conspiracy in loan sharking, extortion and embezzlement.

6

Finance
The rail regulator, John Swift, could be sacked as sacrificial lamb for the worsening public image of the industry.

11

Sport
Aston Villa, shunned off the departure of star striker Dwight Yorke with a 3-1 win over Middlesbrough.

13

Weather 2; Obituaries 10
Comment 9; Crossword 12
Sport News
Football 14-16;
Quick Crossword 24



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one year on The past year has been a good one for the prince. His popularity has grown, he seems happier and more relaxed... and the Princess of Wales is no longer there to upstage him



Canadian spring... Prince Charles with William and Harry enjoying a relaxed moment during their visit to Vancouver. His relationship with his sons is obviously affectionate

Diana tragedy transforms Charles

Luke Harding

IT HAS been a good year for Prince Charles. In public he appears a more relaxed, liberated figure. He has emerged from the tragedy of Diana's death with his reputation enhanced. As he approaches his 50th birthday in November, the ruling passions of his life — his children, his mistress and the throne — show tantalising signs of being reconciled. And yet, despite the best efforts of his spin doctors, Charles is not quite the people's prince. The faintly growing hope among his advisers, though, is that he may yet emerge as the people's king. Though it seems heretical to say as much, it is almost as if Diana never existed. The premature death of the Princess of Wales at the age of just 36 has plunged her ex-husband from darkness into light. From the early days of their courtship, through the dismal years of their marriage, Charles was all too aware that it was Diana the crowds both at home and abroad wanted to see. Now Diana is no longer there to up-

stage him, the prince is once again the centre of attention. After a decade of hostility and mutual loathing, Charles has now repaired his relations with the media. Most crucially, his softer side has been on display over the last year. His relationship with his sons — now 16 and 13 — is obviously affectionate. It is this, more than anything, which explains his enhanced public standing revealed earlier this month by a Guardian ICM opinion poll. For the first time in four years, a majority of the public — 54 per cent — believe he would make a good king, compared to just 40 per cent in October last year. The rise in Charles's fortunes has also been driven by his humanitarian response to Diana's death. It was Charles who flew to Paris to collect his ex-wife's body and bring it home. While the Queen and others in her circle adopted an astonishingly legalistic stance, and argued that Diana should be buried privately by the Spencers, it was Charles who pressed for a public funeral at Westminster Abbey. From this moment when Charles went to inspect the

vast landscape of flowers outside St James's Palace — and hung on to Prince Harry's hand — his standing has risen. Even before Diana's death the campaign to rehabilitate Charles had, in fact, already begun. In the months following the royal divorce, a small group of modernisers had met to discuss his woe-filled public image. Central to this strategy was press relations — and how to rebuild them. Charles had long been advised to try to talk to the media but had been reluctant to forgive. As one aide put it: "In the past, the press would follow him round simply to take the piss. We advised him to give it another go." Last November, in the remote kingdom of Swaziland, in southern Africa, Prince Charles decided to talk to the press for the first time in a decade. This breakthrough was to go down as a landmark. Behind the scenes, Charles's two principal spin doctors — his urban deputy private secretary Mark Bolland, and Tom Shebbeare, the director of the Prince's Trust — had been hard at work. It was Shebbeare who had managed to pull off what was essentially a public relations stunt, by inviting the Spice Girls over to South Africa on the final leg of the November tour. The defining image of Charles's year came when he posed with the Spice Girls and Nelson Mandela, at the South African president's lush Pretoria home. It was surreal, it was tacky, but it worked. Since then the Prince of Wales has enjoyed the kind of press he could only have dreamed of at the height of his bitter public feud with Diana. In February, journalists were again invited to share a plane with the prince on another image-building tour, this time to Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan. The trip revealed two different characters: one, obviously moved during a visit to a hostel for HIV-positive women in Nepal; the other, largely indifferent to the plight of refugees, forcibly expelled from Bhutan. On the way home Charles expressed the callous view that the Bhutanese refugees were "not genuine". For all his amused and unflinching stoicism, the prince remains opinionated and intel-

lectually vain. Middle age suits him. His reaction to the times. But his romanticism — which finds expression in his watercolours and his love of organic gardening — seems less objectionable. While Charles has clearly moved on from Diana's death, his impact on William and Harry is harder to discern. William has already been identified by the royal watchdog as the Windsors' next superstar. He is, though, he does not want to be, his mother's de facto replacement. Prince Harry, who at just 13 has a more certain human touch, is more at ease in front of the crowds. Back in the bowels of St James's Palace, meanwhile, aides continue to ponder what to do with the woman known in royal circles as Mrs P-B — Camilla Parker Bowles. William was introduced to his father's long-time companion in June when he unexpectedly dropped in at St James's Palace. Since then Charles has made little secret of his closeness to Mrs Parker Bowles. He has hosted a 51st birthday party for her at a Mayfair

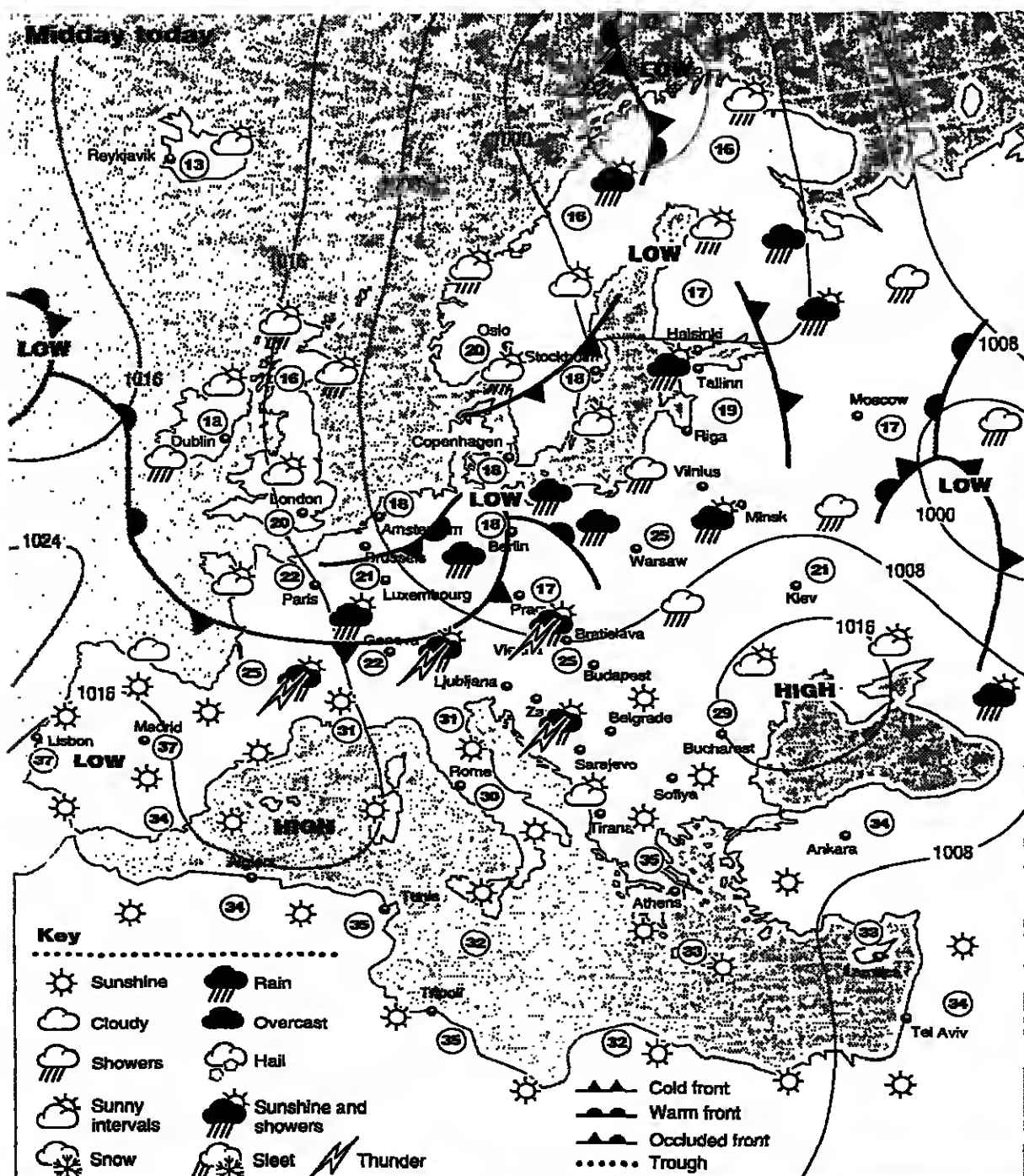
club. Earlier this month she sat next to him when William and Harry threw a private birthday party for their father at Highgrove, Charles's Gloucestershire home. There is no clear sense of where, exactly, the relationship is going. As far as the prince is concerned their friendship is a private matter. "There seems to be no prospect of remarriage. But public attitudes towards this most delicate of questions appear to be softening — with 35 per cent in the most recent ICM poll believing they should remarry, compared to 30 per cent a year ago. A discreet campaign of media-managing Camilla continues. Asked whether Charles and Camilla would appear together in public soon, a senior aide replied: "I very much doubt it."

Only one imponderable factor remains: when will Charles finally inherit the throne? The Queen has made it clear that she has no intention of abdicating. Given the long-lived nature of his relatives — his grandmother turned 98 this month — may still have a long time to wait.



Camilla Parker Bowles... no prospect of remarriage

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities

Today	tomorrow	Wednesday	Thursday
London 14-18	15-19	16-20	17-21
Edinburgh 12-16	13-17	14-18	15-19
Glasgow 11-15	12-16	13-17	14-18
Belfast 10-14	11-15	12-16	13-17
Cardiff 13-17	14-18	15-19	16-20
Birmingham 14-18	15-19	16-20	17-21
Manchester 13-17	14-18	15-19	16-20
Nottingham 13-17	14-18	15-19	16-20
Leeds 13-17	14-18	15-19	16-20
Sheffield 13-17	14-18	15-19	16-20
London 14-18	15-19	16-20	17-21
Edinburgh 12-16	13-17	14-18	15-19
Glasgow 11-15	12-16	13-17	14-18
Belfast 10-14	11-15	12-16	13-17
Cardiff 13-17	14-18	15-19	16-20
Birmingham 14-18	15-19	16-20	17-21
Manchester 13-17	14-18	15-19	16-20
Nottingham 13-17	14-18	15-19	16-20
Leeds 13-17	14-18	15-19	16-20
Sheffield 13-17	14-18	15-19	16-20

European outlook

Scandinavia: Duvet will have early heavy rain, followed by brighter spells and a few showers. The rest of Scandinavia will be on the cool side with sunny spells and showers, although there will be some heavy showers and thunderstorms in the south. Max temp 18-20C. Low Countries, Germany, Austria, Switzerland: A disturbed day with an area of rain moving across the Low Countries and Germany, locally heavy. Switzerland and Austria will have a number of heavy showers and thunderstorms, although there will be some sunny spells. Max temp ranging from a cool 16C on the North Sea coast to 24C in favoured Alpine valleys. France: The Mediterranean coast should stay hot and sunny, but there may be a break in cloud across central France and the Alps. Any showers over northern France will clear away to leave mainly sunny spells. Max temp mostly 21-24C, but much higher on the Riviera. Spain and Portugal: Most places will be fine with plenty of sunshine, but there may be some light showers in the north. The most intense heat affecting inland parts of Andalusia and eastern Portugal. The only exception to the hot and sunny weather will be along the north coast where it will be cloudier and cooler, and the Pyrenees may have some late thunderstorms. Max temp ranging from 20C on the north coast to over 30C in central and southern areas. Italy: Mostly hot and sunny, but some late thunderstorms in the north. Max temp 30-34C. Greece: Fine and hot with lots of sunshine. Max temp 30-33C, but near 35C in Athens.

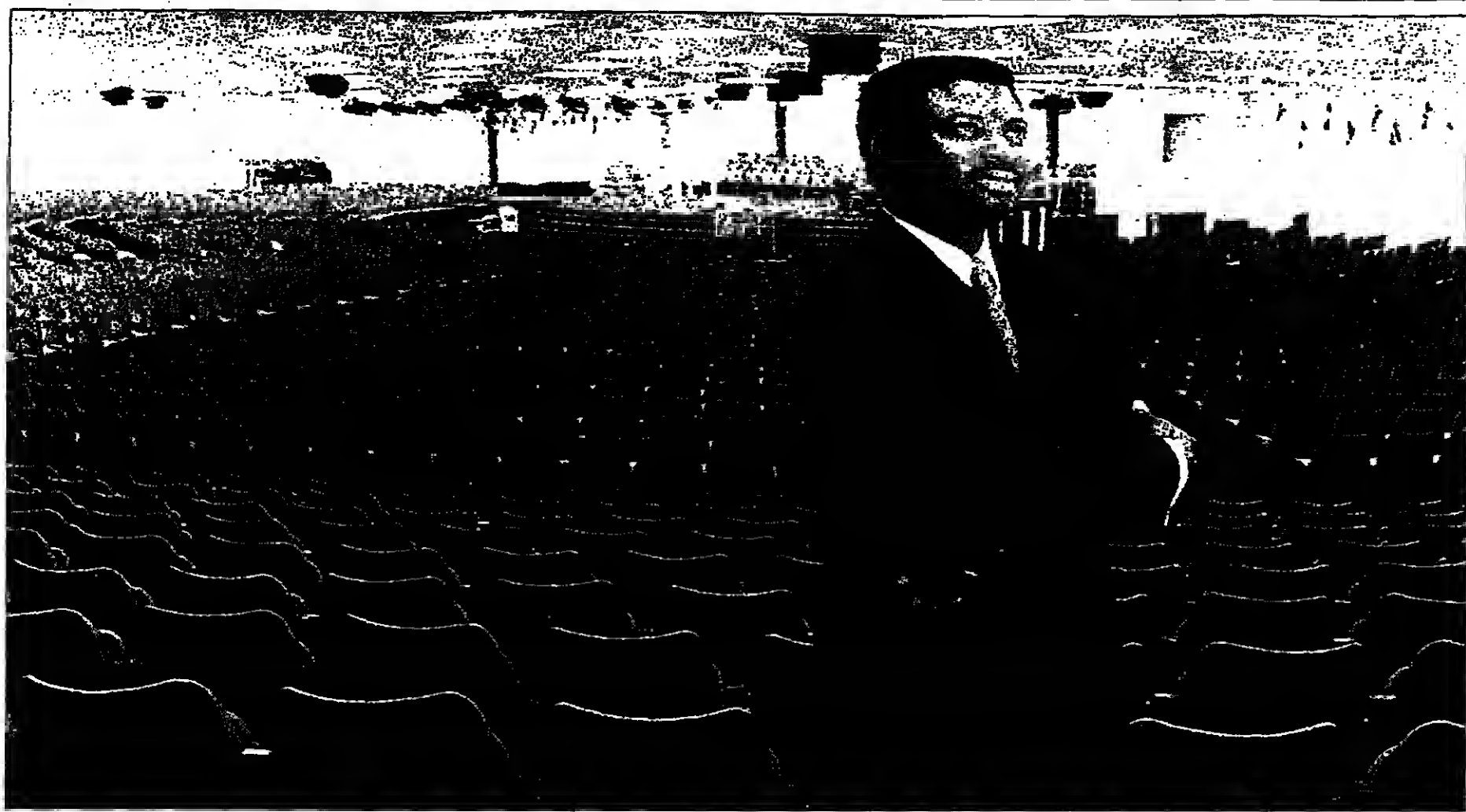
Around the world

Alaska 5-17, 8-17, 10-17, 12-17, 14-17, 16-17, 18-17, 20-17, 22-17, 24-17, 26-17, 28-17, 30-17, 32-17, 34-17, 36-17, 38-17, 40-17, 42-17, 44-17, 46-17, 48-17, 50-17, 52-17, 54-17, 56-17, 58-17, 60-17, 62-17, 64-17, 66-17, 68-17, 70-17, 72-17, 74-17, 76-17, 78-17, 80-17, 82-17, 84-17, 86-17, 88-17, 90-17, 92-17, 94-17, 96-17, 98-17, 100-17. London 14-18, 15-19, 16-20, 17-21, 18-22, 19-23, 20-24, 21-25, 22-26, 23-27, 24-28, 25-29, 26-30, 27-31, 28-32, 29-33, 30-34, 31-35, 32-36, 33-37, 34-38, 35-39, 36-40, 37-41, 38-42, 39-43, 40-44, 41-45, 42-46, 43-47, 44-48, 45-49, 46-50, 47-51, 48-52, 49-53, 50-54, 51-55, 52-56, 53-57, 54-58, 55-59, 56-60, 57-61, 58-62, 59-63, 60-64, 61-65, 62-66, 63-67, 64-68, 65-69, 66-70, 67-71, 68-72, 69-73, 70-74, 71-75, 72-76, 73-77, 74-78, 75-79, 76-80, 77-81, 78-82, 79-83, 80-84, 81-85, 82-86, 83-87, 84-88, 85-89, 86-90, 87-91, 88-92, 89-93, 90-94, 91-95, 92-96, 93-97, 94-98, 95-99, 96-100.

Television and radio

BBC 1

7.00am Breakfast, 8.00am BBC Breakfast News, 9.00am News, 9.30am News, 10.00am News, 10.30am News, 11.00am News, 11.30am News, 12.00pm News, 12.30pm News, 1.00pm News, 1.30pm News, 2.00pm News, 2.30pm News, 3.00pm News, 3.30pm News, 4.00pm News, 4.30pm News, 5.00pm News, 5.30pm News, 6.00pm News, 6.30pm News, 7.00pm News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm News, 9.00pm News, 9.30pm News, 10.00pm News, 10.30pm News, 11.00pm News, 11.30pm News, 12.00am News, 12.30am News, 1.00am News, 1.30am News, 2.00am News, 2.30am News, 3.00am News, 3.30am News, 4.00am News, 4.30am News, 5.00am News, 5.30am News, 6.00am News, 6.30am News, 7.00am News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm News, 9.00pm News, 9.30pm News, 10.00pm News, 10.30pm News, 11.00pm News, 11.30pm News, 12.00am News, 12.30am News, 1.00am News, 1.30am News, 2.00am News, 2.30am News, 3.00am News, 3.30am News, 4.00am News, 4.30am News, 5.00am News, 5.30am News, 6.00am News, 6.30am News, 7.00pm News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm News, 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Matthew Ashimolowo, minister at the Kingsway International Christian Centre. He ascribes the rise in charismatic worship to unhappiness with materialism

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARNON

Praise be, it's the superchurch

Evangelical tabernacle 'is not aimed at the traditionalists'

Sarah Hall

AN EAST London industrial estate will tonight witness an event unrivalled for nearly 140 years when the biggest church to be created in Britain since 1861

will officially be declared open.

The Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) in Hackney — part of the burgeoning evangelical movement — boasts a 4,000-seat auditorium, double the capacity of Westminster Abbey or St Paul's Cathedral.

The church's stage has room for a 300-strong choir, 10-piece band and white grand piano, the strains of which will be blasted out on a 280,000 state-of-the-art sound system. Three giant TV monitors magnify events for those at the back of the auditorium — and transmit them, via satellite TV, to more than 70 million homes in Europe and Africa.

Britain has not boasted such a superchurch since the

fundamentalist Baptist minister, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, preached to up to 6,000 at his Metropolitan Tabernacle in London from 1861 onwards.

And yet the KICC's opening comes at a time when overall church attendance has fallen by 20 per cent over the last 20 years, with Roman Catholic and Anglican attendance dropping by 27 per cent. Numbers at Roman Catholic mass have plunged from 2.4 million

to 1.7 million during this period, while Anglican roll numbers are down from nearly 2.2 million to under 1.6 million, according to the latest figures from the comprehensive study of British religious life, UK Religious Trends.

But while overall church membership is expected to dip to 5.9 million by the millennium — from 7.5 million in 1980 — attendance has been soaring in the evangelical movement, which accounts for a quarter of all church attendance at present and is predicted to rise to a third by the year 2000.

At Kingsway, where membership has risen from 200 to 5,000 from its start nearly six years ago, the appeal is attributed in part to the use of colloquial language, everyday analogies, and rap, hip-hop, R'n'B and gospel music throughout the two- or three-hour services.

The church's senior minister, the Rev Matthew Ashimolowo, explains: "Over 90

per cent of our members are under 45, and the majority are single people and young couples aged 20 to 35. To attract these young people, who are fleeing other church services, we need to make it relevant. I don't use archaic Christian words but humorous examples.

"When the music starts, you just can't keep them sitting down — so if you want a traditional service, this probably isn't for you."

The pastor, who came to Britain from Nigeria as a missionary 14 years ago, also attributes the rise in charismatic worship to an increasing dissatisfaction with materialism. "This kind of church gives people the feeling of belonging to a family," he says.

Mr Ashimolowo insists the church avoids being impersonal by ensuring the congregants meet in home groups of 10 each week. He adds: "I believe this is the first of many large Christian churches to be opened in Britain during the next decade."



That new-style old-time religion... scenes of enthusiasm at the Kingsway superchurch

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GOODMAN

Radio 4 audience falls by 15pc

Janine Gibson
Media Correspondent

RADIO 4 has suffered a drop of 15 per cent in the number of listeners since the station underwent a radical overhaul in the spring, according to leaked figures. Last month almost 900,000 listeners deserted the network.

James Boyle, Radio 4's controller, whose changes included extending the Today programme and switching Yesterday in Parliament to long wave, pledged to quit if his new-look schedule was not judged a success by next spring.

Yesterday's leaks, from the official ratings compiler Rajar, only cover listening during July, but they show that 7.489 million people tuned in last month, a drop of 792,000 from June.

A spokeswoman for the BBC played down the fall in listening and blamed seasonal adjustments.

She refused to comment on the leaked figures, as Rajar rules state that stations can comment on the official quarterly figures only. The next official quarterly report will be released in September.

The spokeswoman denied, however, that Mr Boyle's changes were proving misguided. "Radio 4 listening is

based on habit which is built up over time. We have always said that the revamp of the schedule is a long term strategy designed to see Radio 4 into the next millennium, not a quick fix."

Last quarter's consolidated figures gave Mr Boyle's changes a cautious thumbs-up, when they showed that more people were sampling the new look Radio 4. A breakdown revealed that listeners were staying tuned for shorter periods, however.

Yesterday's leaked figures show that some of the changes to the Radio 4 schedule have not had the desired effect, although the predicted revolt by Archers fans

against its move to 2pm has not taken place. In fact, audiences for The Archers have risen by 27 per cent on last year.

But there are casualties. A new quiz show half-hour introduced by Mr Boyle between 1.30pm and 2pm has lost 30 per cent of listeners compared with last year, when the World At One and The Archers filled the slot.

One of the most controversial moves was moving Farming Today in order to start the flagship Today programme at 6am instead of 6.30. Yesterday's figures show that audiences have dropped slightly in that first half-hour of the programme.

With a lot of help from his friends

Review

Caroline Sullivan

Ringo Starr
Shepherd's Bush Empire

RINGO Starr played several roles in The Beatles, but the best remembered is that of the diminutive clown who made up for his talent deficit by being droll and occasionally staging one of Lennon and McCartney's jokier ditties. That same good-old-Ringo theme informs his

new album, The Vertical Man, and it certainly informed this one-off date.

At nearly 60, Starr is no fool. Aware that he's not up to carrying an entire show, he redistributed the burden on to the abler shoulders of Peter Frampton, Jack Bruce of Cream, Gary Brooker (Procol Harum), Simon Kirke (Bad Company/Free) and one Mark Rivera. The All Starr Band, as they are known, shared the spotlight equally with Ringo.

To put it another way, those who came to see Ringo were to for a shock. He sang fewer than half the 25 numbers, and for several songs at a stretch

wasn't even onstage. Instead we were treated to Bruce singing old Cream tunes, Brooker wailing his way through A Whiter Shade of Pale, Frampton reliving his seventies heyday, and so on.

Starr did warn us at the start. After a frolicking intro of It Don't Come Easy and Act Naturally, he said: "This is how it works. I'll do a few, and the band will do a few, then I'll do a few."

So Ringo did a few, primarily from the playlog-for-laugh catalogue — Yellow Submarine, With a Little Help from My Friends, and all the rest. Then, sunglasses firmly

to place and tunic flapping around still-trim knees, he retreated behind his drums and lightly tapped out a beat as band members took their turns.

Each All Starr played his greatest hit (Sunshine of Your Love from Bruce, All Right Now from Kirke, etc), capering as if he hadn't been near a stage in years. After everyone had had a go, Starr did an other number or two, such as a pub-rock version of Love Me Do that debuted the Beatles' memory, and the whole thing went round again, then a third time, five All Starr songs to every one of Ringo's.



"A manager who says 'I don't know if we deserved three points but we got them; that's what matters' is showing the ruthless pragmatism that will keep his side from relegation come what may..."

Julie Welch, Fair Game

Sports News, page 19

Mothers who smoke pass carcinogens on to foetus

Sarah Hall

WOMEN who smoke during pregnancy transmit a potent cancer-causing substance to their unborn babies, scientists have discovered.

Research released today reveals that byproducts from a chemical in tobacco smoke which is believed to cause lung cancer have been found in the urine of babies born to smokers.

The findings mean that the infants of smokers are more likely to develop cancer than those of non-smokers, a leading cancer expert says.

"This is absolute dynamite," said Gordon McVie, the Cancer Research Campaign's director general. "We have always known it was bad for women to smoke during pregnancy, but now, for the first time, we have hard graphic facts that the baby is exposed to these cancer-causing chemicals thanks to the mother's smoking habits."

The research, by the University of Minnesota Cancer Center, in Minneapolis, detected byproducts of the nicotine-derived chemical NNK — a tobacco-specific carcinogen — in the first urine of babies born to smoking mothers but not in that of babies of non-smokers.

A team led by Stephen Hecht analysed the first urine of 48 babies for NNK metabolites — byproduct chemicals left after a substance is broken down by the body — and found them to 22 of the 31 samples from babies whose mothers smoked. No metabolites of the cancer-causing substance were found in the urine of babies whose mothers did not smoke.

The findings suggest that "substantial" levels of the carcinogen are passed through the mother's placenta and broken down in the unborn baby's body. And they reveal that the baby has to contend with higher levels of the chemical than his mother: at 10 per cent of the levels found in the urine of adult smokers, these were, weight-for-weight, 2½ times the adult concentration.

The research adds to the catalogue of evidence opposing pregnant women smok-

ing. Babies whose mothers smoke while pregnant are more likely to be small and underweight, have low intelligence and suffer from glue ear.

But the new study, presented today at the American Chemical Society in Boston, Massachusetts, is unique in proving that a cancer-causing substance specific to tobacco is transmitted to the foetus. Until now, all the evidence of harm to the foetus has been epidemiological, based on statistical correlations.

Dr Hecht described the findings as "an unacceptable risk" and said the levels of NNK byproducts were "substantial when one considers that exposure of the developing foetus to NNK would have taken place throughout pregnancy". Women who smoke during pregnancy often continue afterwards, and their children will be exposed to this carcinogen for many years, he said.

'We have facts: the baby is exposed to cancer-causing chemicals'

Professor McVie said babies born to mothers who smoked would need "pretty good DNA repair mechanisms" to avoid having an increased risk of cancer than babies born to non-smokers.

He added: "This research reveals that babies have been swimming in a bath of tarry carcinogens — cancer-causing substances — before their birth, and that this has gone through the placenta and right through their bodies. It's gone through the bloodstream, been metabolised, gone through the liver and reached the kidneys. It's awful. All the tissues in the body must have seen it."

Clive Bates, director of Action on Smoking and Health, said babies whose mothers smoked when pregnant suffered "one of the nastiest forms of passive smoking".

"Everything possible should be done to help pregnant women quit smoking," he added.

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'We intend to take down [Bin Laden's] terror network. He was not our target as such. We were targeting his infrastructure and his network and we believe that was a mission accomplished'

William Cohen, US defence secretary



'We have independent evidence ourselves that Bin Laden and others were seeking to acquire chemical and biological weapons in order to prosecute the kind of campaign that we know they were involved in'

George Robertson, UK defence secretary



'We asked him to keep silent, and told him it's not your business to take revenge or say I will do this or that'

Mullah Mohamed Omar, leader of the Taliban militia, on Osama bin Laden, left

Terror threat to US and Israeli planes

America is put on its guard as the defence secretary warns citizens: 'Be on heightened alert'

Nick Hopkins, Ed Vulliamy in Chicago, and John Hooper in Rome

OSAMA bin Laden's terrorist organisation has four targets in its sights — including airlines — for revenge attacks against the United States and Israel after last week's US missile raids against the self-styled Islamic organisation.

In faxes sent from Peshawar, the international Islamic Front for Holy War against the Jews and Crusaders (IIF) said it was mobilising against the US and Israel to bring down their airplanes, prevent the safe passage of their

ships, orchestrate occupation of their embassies, force closure of American and Israeli companies and banks.

The group did not specify how these goals would be pursued, but warned that Islamic militants had already been mobilised and that they would be "pitiless and violent".

All American citizens were put on notice yesterday by the US defence secretary, William Cohen, that they "should be on heightened alert, and aware of their environment".

The Federal Aviation Authority on Saturday ordered airports across the country to "further enhance security measures". By yesterday, airport security patrols were making their presence felt

more strongly, with plainclothes officers going into uniform to patrol with dogs at airports in Washington, New York and Chicago. Dog-patrol units were also deployed at important points in the capital.

A Red Alpha alert is already in force at US diplomatic missions and military posts overseas after the bombing of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on August 7. Mr Bin Laden's group is suspected of carrying out the attack, in which 257 people were killed, most of them Africans.

In Washington, the number of security guards is to be increased this week at all government buildings in the capital, bolstered by special police anti-terrorist units. In a symbolic expression of US determination, huge concrete barriers are also being put around the Washington Monument, the towering obelisk that dominates the Mall.

An overwhelming 73 per cent of Americans — surveyed by Newsweek — support last week's US bombing of Bin Laden training camps in south-east Afghanistan and a factory in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum. Public and media opinion seems relatively unaffected by accusations from Sudan that the Khartoum site was unconnected with terrorist activity. According to a senior White House source who spoke to

the Guardian, the US raids were primarily the brainchild of the National Security Council and State Department, rather than the Clinton White House. With a continuing eye on potential threats overseas, government guidelines were issued at the weekend for US travellers and tourists abroad, urging them to avoid public places. Millions of American business reps and holidaymakers

are overseas at any time, and one official indicated that any of them could be at risk. "Even if diplomatic and military installations may be the preferred targets, virtually any US site or citizen is a potential target in places where hating America is a national pastime." Britain could also be vulnerable after Tony Blair's wholehearted support for President Clinton's attacks on suspected Bin Laden installa-

tions in Afghanistan and Sudan last week. It was to the London base of the fundamentalist group al-Mujahideen — mouthpiece of the International Islamic Front worldwide — that the IIF's threatening faxes were sent from Peshawar on Saturday. The faxes called on Muslims to "take necessary steps" and declared: "The war has begun."

Some keen Bin Laden supporters live in Britain as political refugees. One is Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed, who founded al-Mujahideen in Saudi Arabia, and describes himself as the British spokesman for the IIF.

Sheikh Omar said yesterday it was "possible" that the IIF would identify targets in Britain.

"I am only passing on the message of the IIF, I am not responsible for military action," he said. "But I would take the threat very seriously. I would expect that Muslims

in Europe will take action. US forces are legitimate targets. Even moderate Muslim groups have been contacting us saying how angry they are."

In an interview with La Repubblica, the Rome daily newspaper, Sheikh Omar went further: the IIF, he said, intended to hijack aircraft, and Mr Bin Laden had a \$600 million war chest to pay for the Islamic jihad.

He said that the IIF had bombed the US embassy in Nairobi because it was a CIA stronghold, and the headquarters of American espionage in Africa.

It is understood that the Home Office is taking the possibility of IIF retaliation seriously, and that MI5 and MI6 are working with Special Branch to update and review a list of Islamic militants living in Britain.

However, the Home Office refused to comment on such a sensitive subject.

US 'prepared for nuclear strikes on terror groups'

NUCLEAR strikes against terrorist groups armed with weapons of mass destruction are part of official US military doctrine, it was claimed yesterday, by a senior US official.

The document states that "neither the law of armed conflict nor any other customary or conventional international law prohibits

the use of nuclear weapons in armed conflicts".

Dan Plesch, director of Basic, said last night: "For the US to consider formally using nuclear weapons against non-state actors only serves to make the 'unthinkable' act of nuclear war more 'thinkable'."

Factory rubble yields no sign of arms

David Hirst in Khartoum

THERE was precious little sign of anything sinister when foreign journalists got to the controversial chemical plant which the American cruise missiles hit. No signs, anyway, that anyone had been trying to hide anything, or planned to do so. Access was easy.

I simply said I was a journalist, and was invited to go around as I pleased — provided I did not disturb anything.

Everything had to be left in place, just as it was after 7.30 on Thursday evening when the missiles smashed into it with such deadly accuracy that they barely damaged adjoining buildings.

In the reception area, samples of its wares were scattered around: Shifatur, Shifamol, Shifacel. When I picked one up, Dr Alamin Shibli, the export manager, carefully replaced it. No one, he explained, must touch anything before international experts examined the site.

Dr Shibli's great hopes were pinned on the laboratory. The bulk of the plant is utterly demolished but the laboratory is the least damaged. There, amid the rubble, one can make out plants that are still discernably intact. "This is what we will show the investigators," he said. "In those bottles are the reagents that will prove what we really did here — and it had nothing to do with chemical weapons."

A leading opposition lawyer, Ghazi Suleiman, represents Salah Idriss, the owner of the Shifa plant. In spite of his hostility to Sudan's Islamic government, Mr Suleiman strongly criticises the



Philippe Borel, the United Nations humanitarian co-ordinator in Sudan, gestures as he wanders through the rubble of the destroyed factory yesterday

US attacks. "The US has the right to defend itself against terrorism," he said. "But on behalf of my client, an international businessman who lives in many countries, I want to persuade the Americans that they have made a mistake. This was no chemical weapons factory; do you think that, if it was, all the country's pharmacy students would come to visit as part of their training. The Americans could not have found it equal for quality and sophistication, in all of Sudan."

The US raid has helped the government as it faces an ever-rising sea of troubles — renewed famine in the south,

civil war, international hostility, and mounting unpopularity at home.

"The government could not be happier," said a lawyer who wished to remain anonymous. "Even if that factory really were producing chemical weapons, it could have turned the raid to its advantage, but imagine what it can make of it if it was not."

The regime, which has long occupied a prominent place on the US's list of "terrorist states", clearly intends to do all it can to get the US for a kind of hi-tech terrorism of its own. It wants the Security Council to debate "this flagrant act of criminal aggression".

and an on-the-spot international investigation.

The international inquiry is one part of the Sudanese government's strategy, what it conceives as a righteous and respectable one.

The other, the domestic one, is to exploit to the hilt the patriotic indignation produced by the raid and, above all, exploit it against the opposition.

On Saturday President Omar Bashir addressed "the march of anger" which his government had laid on. Thousands of soldiers, schoolchildren and government employees, trucked in for the occasion, paraded through Khartoum shouting "Amer-

ica must be destroyed" and "Yesterday Nalrobl, tomorrow the White House". Mr Bashir told them that, with its raid, the US had "opened the doors of holy war and paradise" to a people familiar "with the sweetness of martyrdom".

But his strongest rhetoric was reserved for the exile opposition, a coalition of Arab and other Muslim northerners and African southerners. John Garang's Sudan People's Liberation army controls large segments of the south: the Arab-Muslims have more recently seized border regions in the Kassala and Port Sudan areas of the

north. "There are those who are much worse than Clinton," he said, "and they are Sudanese." It was these "traitors", according to yesterday's banner headlines, "who admitted urging the US to strike." They were trying to "climb to power on American shoulders."

This is just the kind of demagoguery, said Mr Suleiman, to which the raid was bound to give rise. "We are invited to find ourselves looking to the sky" — for the external enemy — "instead of where the real problems lie, which is right here, on the ground, and of our government's making."

'Soon, I will go back to jihad. First, America'

In Peshawar, victims speak to Suzanne Goldenberg

AMERICA'S strike on the Afghan training camps of Osama bin Laden left the millionaire Saudi militant's bases relatively intact. Saudi Arabia has bred new disciples among the men who became the unintended targets of Washington's wrath.

At the worst-hit site in a cluster of six camps in the barren mountains near the eastern Afghan town of Khost, the men were asleep in their tents when there was a flash of light, a piercing whistle, and an explosion.

"I'd never seen anything like it," said Ahmed Sarwar, a Pakistani who has spent 19 years fighting in Afghanistan. "At first I thought it was a bomb, but then I knew it couldn't be because I saw a shining object with a lot of fire in its tail."

He was at the Khalid bin Walid camp, a group of 10 tents housing trainees for a splinter group of the Harkat-ul-Ansar. The Pakistan-based extremist group is blamed for the kidnapping and murder of four Western tourists — including Britons Keith Mann and Paul Wells — in Indian-controlled Kashmir three years ago. Last year, the US state department branded it a terrorist group.

Mr Sarwar was sleeping 20 feet from the spot where the closest cruise missile landed. He said the strikes left six or seven craters — "big enough to hold a small car".

This nearby Amir Muawiyah camp, which also was destroyed by fire and burning metal, likewise belonged to Pakistani-based extremists training not to fight America but to fight Indian rule in disputed Kashmir.

The third camp hit was the al-Badr camp for Arab mili-

tants, which does belong to Mr Bin Laden. All three camps are relics of the 1979-89 Afghan war when outside recruits came to fight the occupying Soviet army.

As described by visitors and recent occupants, the camps bear little resemblance to picture Washington has painted of its target — a sophisticated "university for terrorists".

The men slept in the open or in crude tents. The one solid building at Khalid bin Walid camp was the mosque, destroyed when a nearby munitions depot exploded. A Pakistani reporter who visited Harkat training camps last May said the fighters were armed only with Kalashnikovs and rocket-propelled grenades.

Mr Bin Laden's disciples at the al-Badr camp were a three-hour walk away. Mr Sarwar said, "It couldn't have been a mistake by the US," he said. "It was deliberate. We are pretty far from that camp."

Of the 21 killed by the US attack, eight were Arab, suggesting Mr Bin Laden's network was left relatively intact. The Harkat lost a commander, Abu Haraira.

Although Washington says it fired more than 70 missiles on Mr Bin Laden's Afghan bases, eyewitnesses can so far account for only 20. And they claim the missiles landed on three camps — and not the six cited by Washington.

Lying with severe burns at Peshawar's Hayatabad hospital, Habib-ur-Rehman, a 24-year-old Pakistani, waits to learn if he will walk again. America and Jews, he says, have taken on Muslims, but they don't know what they have got themselves into. "Thank god Osama is safe."

Mohammed Khalid, aged 22 and from the Pakistani city of Multan, is in high spirits though his head is bandaged. He was still too green to be sent to Kashmir. Now the battlefield has changed: "Soon, I will go back to jihad, god willing. First we will go to America, then to Kashmir."

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مكتبة الصلح

Blair and Taoiseach disagree over whether Omagh is 'final event' of 29 years of Troubles □ 'Amateurs' become last group still at war

PM prepares anti-terror package for Ulster visit

Michael White, Richard Norton-Taylor and John Miffin

TONY Blair's counter-terrorism measures to match the Irish government's crackdown will avoid the need to recall Parliament, it emerged last night as the Prime Minister prepared to visit Northern Ireland tomorrow.

Though Whitehall believes that Dublin is, for the most part, "catching up" with Britain's anti-terrorist legislation, the Government plans to borrow the Irish practice of convicting suspects of belonging to a banned organisation, solely on the word of a senior police officer.

But the prospect that the security services will win a campaign to have evidence obtained by telephone tapping admitted in court proceedings is receding, sources hinted. An amendment to the 1985 Interception of Communications Act would mean a brief recall of both Houses of Parliament, which ministers wish to avoid.

On Saturday, a week after the Omagh bomb, the Irish National Liberation Army announced it was ending its 23-year campaign of violence. The group was responsible for about 100 killings, including many of its own members murdered during four bouts of internal feuding.

In 1979 the INLA assassinated Airey Neave, the shadow Northern Ireland secretary, at Westminster, and, more latterly, just after Christmas shot dead the Loyalist Volunteer Force leader, Billy Wright, in the Maze prison.

With Unionist and nationalist communities in the province anxious for reassurance,

Mr Blair will tomorrow be treading a political tightrope during what is expected to be an overnight visit to Belfast and beyond.

One sign of sensitivity came yesterday over his reported optimism that the 28 deaths at Omagh would prove to be the "final horrific event" of 29 years of the Troubles. The Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, warned that such hopes were misplaced.

"I'd love to say to you that I believe this is the last event... Bertie Ahern

fast With Frost. "They believe that they have some kind of a mandate from some period in history that gives them some right to do this. Of course they have not."

He also predicted that the IRA would be able to move on beyond "a lot of the rhetoric of the past and the harsh words", and decommitment its weapons, as agreed, in the next two years.

Mr Ahern coupled the remark with a reference to the need "to talk about demilitarisation in an overall sense". This term is usually a coded phrase for withdrawal of British troops, and alarmed some Unionists.

Given his unqualified support last week for the United States' attacks on suspected terrorist targets, Mr Blair also surprised some MPs on

both sides of the Ulster debate in an article for yesterday's Observer when he ruled out using the SAS to "take out" known terrorists.

"Our country is a country built on democratic values" and must win the argument by democratic means, he explained.

Labour MP Tam Dalyell asked: "There are terrorists in Dundalk. Should we bomb Dundalk, or Norwalk in New York?"

Unionist MPs are suspicious of government rhetoric for the opposite reason. The Democratic Unionist Party's Pater Robinson last night warned that both London and Dublin would miss a vital opportunity if they did not impose tougher measures while both communities were outraged by the Omagh bomb.

"Support for such action will not be there for long," he said.

With the Blair family still on holiday until today, ministers and officials, led by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, are still working on the measures promised last week.

Most of the measures the Irish government has said it will introduce are already enshrined in Britain's Prevention of Terrorism Act and the 1996 PTA (Additional Powers Act) which gives the police wide-ranging powers to arrest, detain, question, stop and search.

The power to imprison suspects for being members of a proscribed terrorist organisation on the sworn evidence of a single senior police officer — will not need a change in primary legislation, Downing Street suggested yesterday. The Northern Ireland Office confirmed that the Real IRA, which admitted responsibility for the Omagh bomb, was already such a proscribed organisation; no legal change was needed.



Mourners in Omagh on Saturday. Below, the car bomb in a picture released by the RUC and taken seconds before by a camera found in the rubble. MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: LOUISA BULLER



Continuity IRA becomes lone hawk as INLA shuns terror

John Miffin
Ireland Correspondent

AND then there was one. The Irish National Liberation Army's decision to end its 23-year campaign of violence, means that, among the myriad of republican and loyalist terrorist groups, only the tiny Continuity IRA is still on a war footing.

Yet, although opposed to the Good Friday Agreement and the multi-party negotiations preceding it, CIRA, also called the Continuity Army Council, stands apart for another reason. It is the only terror outfit never to have killed anybody.

Always a small organisation, it is now made up of at most two dozen volunteers. It came to the security forces' attention soon after the first IRA ceasefire was called in 1994, when it received bomb-making equipment from IRA dissidents opposed to the cessation.

When it emerged three years ago, CIRA claimed to be the final custodian of a 32-County republic.

It exploded a 1,250lb car bomb in July 1996, five months after the IRA's first ceasefire collapsed and at the height of that year's Drumcree crisis.

Then there was the 1,000lb van bomb which ripped through the Protestant village of Markethill, County Armagh, last September. It was planted the day after Sinn Féin won its place at Stormont's negotiating table when it affirmed to the Mitchell principles of democracy and non-violence governing the talks process.

There were again no injuries in the bombing of the RUC station, the group's first successful targeting of a military installation. But, although CIRA was blamed, it is likely that IRA dissidents were closely involved. They were then on the point of quitting the IRA over Sinn Féin's participation at Stormont.

The dissidents soon went on to form the new group later calling itself the Real IRA. Its leaders saw CIRA as a well-meaning, amateurish bunch, with limited usefulness.

The organisations did work together, though, along with the INLA, responsible for 100 deaths since 1975, many of its own members were killed in four bouts of internal feuding.

When the Real IRA was founded, its chief of staff, the IRA's former quartermaster-general, successfully pleaded with several of CIRA's leading figures to switch sides. Those who did were the most able operatives, largely

recent recruits from the IRA, and CIRA has since been dubbed a Dad's Army.

It is linked to Republican Sinn Féin, founded after a split with the Gerry Adams-led Sinn Féin, and its leadership at Sinn Féin's annual conference, in 1996. The row was over Sinn Féin's decision to take up any seats it won to the Irish Parliament, regarded by RSF as a partitionist body.

RSF is led by Ruairi O'Bradaigh, a former IRA chief of staff. It has an estimated 800 members, and is the most fundamentalist of all republican political parties. It is unlikely that the RSF will change its analysis, as the Irish Republican Socialist Party, the political wing of INLA, did, signalling its shift to ceasefire. Assuming the Real IRA's suspension of military operations becomes permanent, that will make CIRA the repository of headline republicans once again.

Whether CIRA is prepared to put civilian lives at risk again is a key factor in de-

CIRA sees itself as true to values of trade unionist executed in 1916

termining the future for violent republicanism.

While republicans are keeping a low profile, CIRA's rhetoric will be undiminished. It sees itself as defender of the faith, true to the values of trade unionist James Connolly, one of those executed in the Easter Rising of 1916.

A joint Easter message from the political and military wings in Salsire, RSF's newspaper, accused Sinn Féin of making it harder to overthrow British rule by its imminent participation in the Good Friday Agreement. The deal was no stepping-stone to Irish unity.

It read: "We note the continuing campaign of the Continuity IRA, who, by their activities, have brought to the notice of the British government and all concerned that English rule in Ireland is being resisted and always will be resisted, no matter how such rule is camouflaged."

"In the name of all those honoured dead down the centuries and over the decades, we renew our appeal for support in order that their sacrifices not be in vain. Let us now confront reality and not delude ourselves with vain hopes. The British government will depart from our shores when compelled to do so, and not before."

Extracts from the INLA's ceasefire declaration

WE HAVE accepted the advice and analysis of the Irish Republican Socialist Party that the conditions for armed struggle do not exist.

The Irish National Liberation Army has now shifted from the position of defence and retaliation to the position of complete ceasefire.

We have instructed all our units to desist from offensive actions. The Irish National Liberation Army is now on ceasefire...

In calling this cessation we recognise that the political situation has changed since the formation of the INLA. We recognise that armed struggle can never be the only option for revolutionaries...

Although we believe the Good Friday Agreement was not worth the sacrifices of the past 30 years and are still politically opposed to it, the people of the island of Ireland have spoken clearly as to their wishes.

The working classes have borne the brunt of the consequences of the war for the past three decades. They have also suffered repression, social deprivation, unemployment and poverty.

We recognise their desire for a cessation of violence expressed through the referendum and for a peaceful future.

The onus is now on all political parties, governments and observers to ensure

that the democratic wishes of the Irish people are upheld. This includes all armed groups. Therefore we have taken this ceasefire decision to take account of the people's desires.

Now we turn to the consequences of our part in the war. We acknowledge and admit faults and grievous errors in our prosecution of the war. Innocent people were killed and injured and at times our actions as a

liberation army fell far short of what they should have been.

For this we as republicans, as socialists and as revolutionaries do offer a sincere, heartfelt and genuine apology. It was never our intention, desire or wish to become embroiled in sectarian or internecine warfare.

We accept responsibility for our part in actions which hindered the struggle. Those actions

should never have happened.

We have, however, nothing to apologise for in taking the war to the British and their loyalist henchmen. Those who preyed on the blood of nationalists paid a heavy price.

However, the will of the Irish people is clear. It is now time to silence the guns and allow the working classes the time and opportunity to advance their demands and their needs...

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Reshuffle stacks deck against Yeltsin

Who really brought back Chernomyrdin? James Meek asks

BEING obliged to recall a prime minister just five months after his resignation is a political wilderness is a grave blow to Boris Yeltsin's prestige — so grave that it may signal the beginning of the end of his hold on the presidency.

Until Mr Yeltsin appears in public to explain his latest action, there will be doubts whether he wanted to bring back Victor Chernomyrdin was forced to do so against his wishes.

That Sergei Kiriyenko, the young banker and former energy minister, should be sacked as prime minister after Russia's long-running financial crisis boiled over is no surprise. But for Mr Yeltsin to turn to the man whose five ineffectual years in the post laid the groundwork for the crisis is a sign either that the head of state is completely out of touch with the realities of his country or that he is left with no choice by a political elite intent on protecting its interests at all costs — including, perhaps, his own family.

The political reincarnation of Mr Chernomyrdin brings no clear benefits for anyone apart from Mr Chernomyrdin himself and whoever helped propel him back into the government.

Mr Yeltsin is unlikely to have taken the decision without consulting his closest advisers: the head of his administration, Valentin Yumashev; his daughter, Tatyana Dyachenko; and his press secretary, Sergei Yastrzhembsky. But ever since Mr Chernomyrdin was sacked, the Kremlin

has faced steady criticism from another quarter: wealthy business "oligarchs" such as Boris Berezovsky, who bankrolled Mr Yeltsin's election campaign.

The president sacked Mr Chernomyrdin because he feared that his power was beginning to rival his own, and because the prime minister was incapable of coping with the looming debt mountain. But his departure deprived both the Yeltsin entourage and the business elite of their most important asset: protection.

If Mr Yeltsin died or became too ill to rule, the reasoning went, the elite would need to ensure a smooth transition of power to someone who would not try to prosecute them or reclaim their dubiously gained wealth. They feared the election of a popular patriot, such as Moscow's mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, or the ex-paratrooper general Alexander Lebed. Mr Chernomyrdin was one of them.

In recent months, however, the fear of Mr Chernomyrdin usurping the president have been overcome by the fear of their leader being usurped by someone far more dangerous. Mr Chernomyrdin has been catapulted back into the position of the man most likely to succeed Boris Yeltsin. If the president dies, is incapacitated or resigns, the prime minister will take over his job for three months before elections. This would give him ample time to fix a victory — and he is so unpopular that it is hard to imagine him winning a free and fair vote.

Mr Chernomyrdin's appointment changes little in



Victor Chernomyrdin For six years the quintessential right-hand man before being sacked earlier this year. Analysts said he had accumulated too much power for Yeltsin's liking

the short term. The famously inarticulate former gas-monopoly boss is not the nationalist demon the West has long feared Russia's chaos would conjure up: he is a conservative apparition without an ideology who presided passively over the country's paralytic economic and political slide.

He was an odd commentary on his fellow Italians — Cardinal Michele Giordano of Naples had just been told he was under investigation for crimes that included conspiracy in loan-sharking, extortion, embezzlement and aiding and abetting money-laundering.

Giorgio Rumi, a historian, said he could not recall any churchman linked with such serious offences in Italy since the country's unification, "much less a member of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of such importance".

On Saturday around 30 officers of the finance police raided the Naples archbishop's palace and confiscated computer disks, accounting ledgers and bank documents.

Cardinal Giordano's lawyer, Enrico Tuccillo, said the police action, against one of the most senior figures in the Italian church, was "totally unjustified".

Several senior churchmen

said they doubted that the 67-year-old cardinal could have been knowingly involved in the offences.

Cardinal Giordano has often spoken out against organised crime in the southern city where he has worked most of his life. In May he said loan-sharking was "a sin scarcely less serious than murder".

But it was an inquiry into an alleged loan-sharking operation in his home town of Sant'Arcangelo, in the southern province of Potenza, that led the finance police to the cardinal in his brother's possession. Last week Cardinal Giordano told the daily La Repubblica that his brother had

been involved in financial difficulties.

"My brother is a builder, a small businessman who has always worked, usually with good results, but on one occasion with disastrous results. He built a block of apartments and couldn't sell them. I gave him a series of blank cheques to help him out of his debts."

"I don't know how much the cheques that were cashed

as they hurried abuse at Mr Kiriyenko last Friday, parliamentarians declared: "There is no government." But now there really is no government — Mr Chernomyrdin has to be confirmed by the Duma before he formally takes office.

Why did Mr Yeltsin bring him back? At a time of crisis, with the falling rouble yet to find its floor, with the banking system on the verge of collapse, with strikes, religious unrest in the North Caucasus and the unpaid wage bill on

the rise, why bring back the man whose government the president said lacked "dynamism and initiative, new outlooks, fresh approaches and ideas"?

Perhaps it is a desperate attempt to rebuild bridges with parliament through the formation of a coalition government, including Communists. But the answer may be that Mr Yeltsin has lost his grip on power. In the past he has defied all restraints to exercise his will. He excelled in

The players



Boris Berezovsky Oil and media baron, secretary of CIS. Master of Kremlin intrigue said to take care of Yeltsin finances



Tatyana Dyachenko The daughter and official image consultant to Yeltsin. One of his few conduits to the Kremlin



Valentin Yumashev Chief adviser and 'son' Yeltsin never had



Sergei Yastrzhembsky Spokesman 'explains' Yeltsin thoughts

playing one group off against another, in confounding his opponents with arbitrary decrees and acts of caprice. His sacking of Mr Chernomyrdin in March was just such a move, but many powerful figures warned he had gone too far.

It is premature to talk in terms of a palace coup. Yet for most of last week, as the rouble spiralled and Western creditors went ballistic over Mr Kiriyenko's debt default, the president remained silent,

seceded in his country residence.

The end of the short prime ministerial career of Sergei Kiriyenko is not an earthquake. The reappointment of a discredited bureaucrat is another step towards the degeneration of Russia's rulers in the eyes of their people and of the world.

Like the rouble, Russian government is devalued.

Markets broadened, page 11
Larry Elliott, page 12

Cape vineyard toasts bright new beginning

Work is a labour of love for a Paarl collective, Alex Duval Smith writes

IN A BREAK from pruning and trellising vines on a slope of the rolling western Cape, Solly Skippers pointed across the valley. "If I worked over there, on the Smil farm, I would be an alcoholic. They still use the dop system and the labourers are treated like we used to be," he said.

By an accident of geography, Mr Skippers, aged 46, no longer suffers the mind-numbing terms of many South African vineyard labourers: 220 a week and eight lots of alcohol a day. He is one of 17 stakeholders in a farmworkers' collective which this year sold 50,000 litres of white and red wine, under its New Beginnings label, to the country's supermarkets.

Mr Skippers, foreman at the Nelson's Creek vineyard in Paarl, said: "I am testate, but before Mr Nelson bought this land in 1989 the old owners handed out tots when we woke up, then at 8am, 8.30am, 11am, midday, 12.30pm, 4pm and 6pm. They were part of our pay."

Now he and the 16 other members work both on the 120 acres owned by Alan Nelson and on the 25% acres the white Cape Town farmer gave to the collective last year.

"We organise ourselves so that we build up overtime on Mr Nelson's land and use it on our own. He lets us use his machinery and tanks. His wine maker trained ours," said Mr Skippers, one of three brothers born on the farm.

It is like crofting, in a sense. "I cannot work towards giving my share in the land to my children; it is only mine so long as I work here."

Mr Nelson's gesture was groundbreaking, especially since the collective owns its land and will soon have its own access road. Many other white vineyard owners maintain some of the most exploitative employment practices.

Mr Nelson, aged 46, said: "I studied law so I would be able to afford to farm wine, but this business takes enormous investment. When I bought this farm in 1988 it was bankrupt and the vines were poor."

"I sat down with the workers and explained that it was my dream to make this land viable. I abolished the dop system and said that if they helped me, I would help them."

I could not afford a farm manager and I knew that the wages I paid were below par, but I sent the workers on courses. It went well and we started making wine in 1994."

The farm's wines have won several awards and are sold directly to the best South African restaurants.

Mr Skippers admits he and the other labourers were dubious of the promises, but Mr Nelson brought in Victor Titus, a Coloured schoolmaster, to gain their confidence. "Mr Nelson did what he promised," Mr Skippers said. He did not speak like a boer, that is, 'yoit, Hotnot, go there, do this'.

Mr Titus remains on Mr Nelson's payroll as "facilitator" for the collective. Inspired by a visit to the farm by women parliamentarians, Speakers from around the world, who were holding a

conference in Cape Town, Mr Titus launched an "adopt-a-row of vines" scheme. The first vine to pay her £50 for a row of New Beginnings vines was the Speaker of the Swedish parliament.

He said: "We still have high expenses. Our first 700,000 rand (£70,000) from the sale of this year's wine will go into a trust fund, where we have already placed the £240,000 given by the government for people from disadvantaged communities to buy land."

"Ultimately we will buy equipment, but in the short term we are looking at health schemes and pensions for the workers and improvements to their homes."

New Beginnings are currently planting Cabernet and Pinotage cultivars, replacing the 30-year-old tired and low-yield Palamino vines.

"Our wine is going to be excellent," Mr Skippers said. "You put a lot of sweat into making a bottle of wine. Now we can put love in as well."

Members of the collective are shown on its wine labels

new beginnings
1998
reminiscent
chardonnay
MAIDEN VINTAGE

Church rallies to 'loan-shark' cardinal

John Hooper in Rome

THE cardinal's hand was trembling perceptibly. "I am experiencing a strange sort of joy," he said. "At last I feel like any other man — one of the people."

It was an odd commentary on his fellow Italians — Cardinal Michele Giordano of Naples had just been told he was under investigation for crimes that included conspiracy in loan-sharking, extortion, embezzlement and aiding and abetting money-laundering.

Giorgio Rumi, a historian, said he could not recall any churchman linked with such serious offences in Italy since the country's unification, "much less a member of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of such importance".

On Saturday around 30 officers of the finance police raided the Naples archbishop's palace and confiscated computer disks, accounting ledgers and bank documents.

Cardinal Giordano's lawyer, Enrico Tuccillo, said the police action, against one of the most senior figures in the Italian church, was "totally unjustified".

Several senior churchmen

said they doubted that the 67-year-old cardinal could have been knowingly involved in the offences.

Cardinal Giordano has often spoken out against organised crime in the southern city where he has worked most of his life. In May he said loan-sharking was "a sin scarcely less serious than murder".

But it was an inquiry into an alleged loan-sharking operation in his home town of Sant'Arcangelo, in the southern province of Potenza, that led the finance police to the cardinal in his brother's possession. Last week Cardinal Giordano told the daily La Repubblica that his brother had

been involved in financial difficulties.

"My brother is a builder, a small businessman who has always worked, usually with good results, but on one occasion with disastrous results. He built a block of apartments and couldn't sell them. I gave him a series of blank cheques to help him out of his debts."

"I don't know how much the cheques that were cashed



Cardinal Giordano and lawyer Enrico Tuccillo talk to journalists. PHOTOGRAPH: FRANCO CASTANO

came to — maybe 70 or 80 million lire (£25,000-£32,000)."

The cardinal said it was his own money, not the church's. "It was my savings from 50 years as a priest."

He said a misunderstanding had occurred because two

nephews, one an architect and the other a builder, were paid sums of money by the archdiocese for some work they had done.

The nephews then passed their cheques to Mario Giordano, leading the prosecution

service to imagine "a link which does not exist between the archdiocese and the activities of which my brother is accused".

La Repubblica, which broke the story, said prosecutors had identified large move-

ments of cash in and out of accounts for which the Cardinal was responsible. They had also found evidence of sophisticated hedged investments and cash deposits of up to £250,000.

The president of the Italian Bishop's Conference, Cardinal Camillo Ruini, expressed his "faith in, high opinion of and brotherly friendship for, Cardinal Giordano in the certainty that the baseness of the accusations against him will soon be recognised".

Outside Naples, where he is popular among the poor, Cardinal Giordano is best known for his identification with the supposedly miraculous liquefaction of a relic kept in the city's cathedral. The purported blood of the fourth-century St Gennaro usually turns to liquid twice a year.

Disaster has struck on at least five occasions when it has not turned to liquid. At a time when many churchmen are sceptical of such manifestations, Cardinal Giordano has embraced the phenomenon and the ritual surrounding it with enthusiasm.

A priest since 1963, he was consecrated as a bishop in 1971 and appointed Archbishop of Naples 11 years ago. He was nominated Cardinal of Naples in 1988.

World Bank's green code shows red light for African oil pipeline

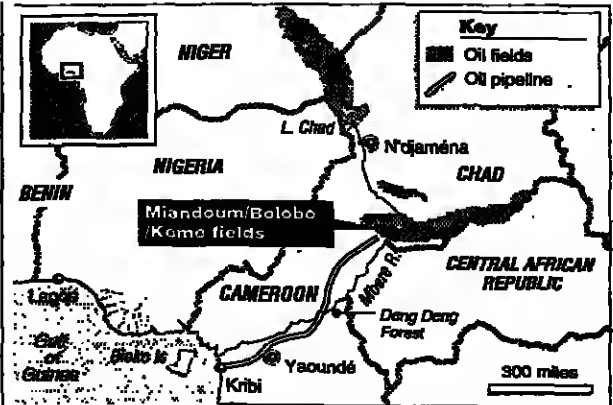
Paul Brown Environment Correspondent

AN OIL pipeline that could transform the economic future of two of Africa's poorest countries, Chad and Cameroon, is being held up by environmentalists at the World Bank, who say it does not conform to the organisation's newly adopted green code.

The issue is causing internal strife at the bank between traditional economists, who believe that the benefits of mega-projects trickle down to the poor, and new staff who have leaked the environmental assessments to try to halt the project.

It is likely to form a test case when the 23 billion 1,000-mile pipeline is considered by the World Bank's board in October. They include International Development Secretary, Clare Short, representing Britain.

The pipeline is to be built by a consortium of Exxon, Shell and Elf, and is expected to double the size of Chad's economy in 10 years. The first of the 900 million barrels of oil reserves is likely to reach the coast by late 2001 if the plan is approved this autumn.



Among the issues raised by the World Bank's environmental team's report, a copy of which has been sent to the Guardian, is the future of pygmy tribes in Cameroon and traditional pastoral people in both countries, whose lifestyle will be disrupted by the pipeline and the population influx it is likely to bring.

Exxon, which heads the consortium, needs the bank's backing to get £1 billion in loans from international banks to finance the project.

It is pushing for a go-ahead before the end of the year.

Korinna Horta, from the Environment Defence Fund in Washington, where the World Bank is based, said: "Exxon is lobbying very hard at the bank and has the backing of the traditional economic lobby who are prepared to overlook the very real environmental dangers for the sake of development."

But there is resistance [at the bank] because of the fate of the tribal people, who get no benefit."

Poor go direct to 'buddy' Estrada

Adam Easton in Manila

EVERY morning thousands of poor Filipinos gather at the gates of Manila's presidential palace. Some come looking for jobs, others ask for farm animals, vehicles or cash hand-outs, but all share the belief that Joseph Estrada, the new "People's President", can deliver them from poverty.

Mr Estrada, a former marine idol, banked on his huge popularity with the country's 35 million poor. He campaigned under the slogan "Erap for the masses" — his nickname is street slang for buddy — and won the largest mandate of any Philippine president this century.

He promised food, security and a revitalised agriculture. But pundits ask how a man who admits that reading a book gives him a headache can succeed where "intellectual" presidents have failed.

The South East Asian economic crisis has stacked the odds against Mr Estrada. Although the received wisdom is that the Philippines has escaped the worst of the "Asian flu", the economy is not ex-

pected to fully recover for at least a year.

The peso has lost 45 per cent of its value, unemployment is 14 per cent, and interest rates have soared.

These facts do not seem to deter the thousands of faithful at the palace gates. They queue up to appeal to the Presidential Action Centre. Upon arrival they are given forms to fill out with their requests. Most wait in vain to see officials, who can only process 500 registrations a day.

One middle-aged hopeful, Paolo Rivera, explains why he is there. "I have no formal education, which is why I am asking for a job from Erap. During the campaign he promised us jobs."

Many business leaders fear he will wait a long time. But some say the administration just needs to spend less time blaming the previous government for its problems.

"If nothing else, we've grown to be extremely resilient and persistent," says Guillermo Luz of the Makati Business Club. "Having clawed our way out of a very deep hole when Marcos fell, people will not sit back and let everything go to pot again."

مكتبة الصالح

Angolan troops bolster Kabila

David Gough in Kinshasa

PAPA Pitchou, who was selling cigarettes outside a Kinshasa hotel yesterday, said he did not expect the rebels to reach the capital. "Our army and our allies are stronger than the rebels; they will defeat them."

President Laurent Kabila's government says the rebellion is being led by the governments and militaries of Rwanda and Uganda, and that Congo's call for help from neighbouring countries is a response to "a foreign invasion of sovereign territory."

A lorryload of Zimbabwean troops was seen driving through Kinshasa yesterday as unconfirmed reports reached the capital of a successful Angolan attack on Kisangani on the Atlantic coast. The reports claimed that the Angolans had captured the city's airport.

That will be a serious blow to the rebel movement, which has been using the airport to ferry troops to the west of the country from their eastern stronghold, the town of Goma. A Western diplomat in Kinshasa said the rebels had suffered another defeat, in the town of Mbandaka-Ngulu, 85 miles south-west of the capital, which had been retaken by Congolese forces.

The rebels said they had taken the strategic northern town of Kisangani, the Congo's third largest town. The government denied the report. According to diplomats in Kinshasa the military situation remains confused and is best described as fluid.

What is without doubt is that the arrival of foreign troops has considerably boosted President Kabila, and the sight of Zimbabwean troops in Kinshasa in lorries loaded with ammunition has

bolstered his army's sagging morale.

It will also have gone a long way towards reassuring the people of Kinshasa, who remain remarkably calm in the face of what seems an inexorable rebel advance.

Djuma, a 21-year-old shopkeeper in the southern suburb of Binza, said he was not nervous about reports that the rebels were closing in on Kinshasa. "Very soon the rebels will be kicked out by the Zimbabweans and the Angolans."

He said some people, particularly whites, had fled their homes in Binza in the last few days, but said their fear was unfounded. "Everything will be fine," he said.

In the Kasu-Vubu district of the city, the Rev Fernando Kuthino said he did not know which side God would take in the rebellion, but he thought the devil was behind the "foreign invasion."

His morning service at the Miracle Church centre yesterday was attended by thousands of worshippers. The congregation was so large that it spilled over the walls of the church compound and into the streets outside. Loudspeakers carried the words of the minister to the surrounding neighbourhood.

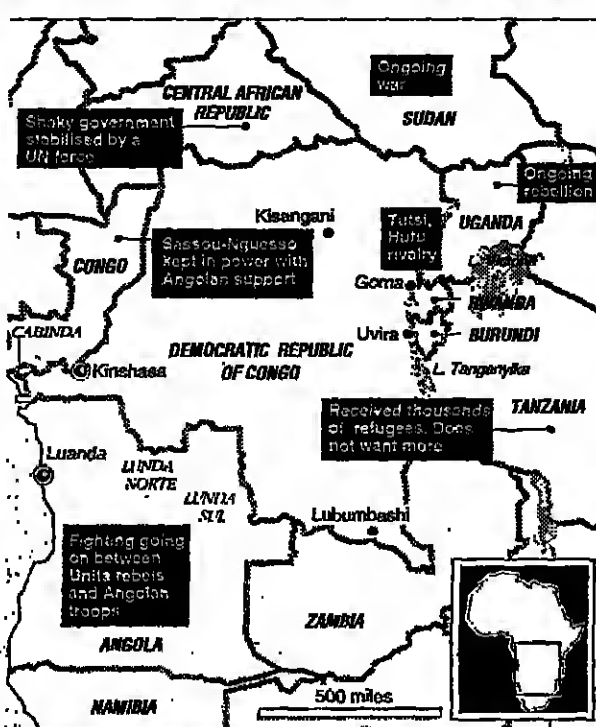
Like most of the five million residents of Kinshasa, Mr Kuthino believes foreigners are leading the rebellion. In particular, Rwanda and Uganda with the tacit support of France, America and Britain.

Mr Kuthino's parish co-ordinator, Timothy Bomper, said more people than usual had attended the service, but he insisted that the mood of the congregation remained calm.

"I don't think our own army can cope with the situation but now that our allies have arrived we are confident of victory."



Rebels brandish machetes in the town of Sona Bata, 60 miles south of Kinshasa. Their leaders claimed yesterday to have taken Congo's third city, Kisangani. PHOTOGRAPH: COFFINE DUKA



Fearful African leaders urge ceasefire

Alex Duval Smith in Johannesburg

AFRICAN leaders meeting in Pretoria called for a ceasefire and troop standstill in the Congo last night, fearful that the country's civil war could escalate into a regional conflict.

The unanimous decision of the heads of state and representatives of 18 countries at the four-hour meeting was announced by the South African president, Nelson Mandela.

Yesterday's meeting came at a time of rising concern that the conflict could spill over into the nine countries that border the Congo. Zimbabwe and Angola say that allowing Mr Kabila to fall could lead to the balkanisation of Congo, and there are fears that such a breakdown could have a devastating impact on sub-Saharan Africa.

Even if it is successful, the agreement at the emergency summit — to which

the rebels were not invited — does not mean that Mr Kabila's position is secure. South Africa, along with the United States and France, want a negotiated settlement which could see him deposed.

South Africa is backed by Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Botswana and Mozambique. They are opposed by Zimbabwe and Angola.

Yesterday's meeting came at a time of rising concern that the conflict could spill over into the nine countries that border the Congo. Zimbabwe and Angola say that allowing Mr Kabila to fall could lead to the balkanisation of Congo, and there are fears that such a breakdown could have a devastating impact on sub-Saharan Africa.

Even if it is successful, the agreement at the emergency summit — to which

der, if elements close to the rebels get into power. Congo, there could be a unitary influence in Kinshasa.

● In Congo-Brazzaville, President Sasson Nguesso is sustained in power with Angolan support.

● In the Central African Republic, the government is shaky, stabilised by a United Nations force but constantly facing 'coups'.

Many in the CAR army are from the same ethnic group as the former Zaire dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko. Mobutists are funding the Congolese rebels.

● Uganda and Rwanda would like Mr Kabila replaced by a more sympathetic government. Uganda is fighting rebels backed by Sudan and uses bases in the Congolese province of Kivu.

Congo. It would benefit from Mr Kabila's demise.

● Tanzania has born the brunt of all recent refugee crises in the region. It does not want an influx of Bahruba from Katanga — Mr Kabila's home territory — or of Hutus from Congo.

● Zambia is hedging its bets. It is used as a conduit for arms to all sides. It will be in a tricky position if Mr Kabila retreats to Katanga in the south of Congo or Unita gains influence.

● Zimbabwe has strong business links with Congo. It is owed an estimated \$100 million from contracts with Mr Kabila's regime.

● Namibia, through business links, is owed an estimated \$30 million by Mr Kabila. However, after sending arms to him last week, Namibia is believed to have been brought into line by South Africa.

German rivals step up election pace

In a campaign without issues, personalities may decide the outcome, writes Ian Traynor

THE race between the chancellor, Helmut Kohl, and Gerhard Schröder to lead Germany into the next millennium moved into high gear at the weekend, with a gruelling schedule of nationwide election rallies in an increasingly close contest.

While Mr Kohl and his senior Christian Democrat lieutenants went on parade before almost 20,000 people in the industrial town of Dortmund yesterday, Mr Schröder and most of the Social Democratic shadow cabinet rushed through a whistle-stop tour of Berlin, Munich and Bonn.

Beer and bratwurst, bombastic rock music, and hot-air

balloons accompanied Mr Schröder across the country as he peddled his central message that Mr Kohl was a burnt-out case after 16 years in power, and that Germany urgently needed a change of leadership, if not direction.

The chancellor, playing on his credentials as a weighty international statesman, under giant posters proclaiming him "world class for Germany", sought to portray his rival as an opportunist who would fritter away the advances of the Kohl years.

An opinion poll yesterday put the Social Democrats four points ahead of the Christian Democrats, at 42 to 38. In the personal popularity stakes,



Kohl: Playing on reputation as weighty world statesman

Mr Schröder maintains a 22-point lead over Mr Kohl.

In the absence of any clear-cut political differences in a campaign marked more by mudslinging than debate of issues, commentators say the

September 27 general election may come down to a personality contest between Mr Kohl and Mr Schröder.

While Mr Kohl presents himself as Mr Reliability, Mr Schröder appears as the agent of dynamism, tapping into a diffuse national yearning for change. The key to victory lies in winning the support of the estimated 40 per cent of voters who are undecided.

While there is little to separate the two centrist parties, the Kohl campaign focused yesterday on trying to present the election as a polarised choice. Wolfgang Schäuble, Mr Kohl's number two, described it as a "choice of direction between the governing centre-right coalition and a leftwing 'red-green' alliance of Social Democrats and environmentalists."

Mr Schröder's campaign, by contrast, is concentrating on the middle ground, seeking



Schröder: Tapping a diffuse yearning for change

to woo traditional Kohl supporters and the don't-knows, and keeping open the option of a "grand coalition" between Social and Christian Democrats, the most popular outcome among the electorate

and the one believed most likely by pundits and voters.

But there is no room for Mr Kohl in a such a scheme and yesterday he promised that "there will not be a grand coalition", although one of his campaign aides contradicted that view.

By the banks of the Rhine on Saturday evening, Mr Schröder, hoarse from a punishing round of campaigning, promised that an SPD-led government would stand or fall on its record in cutting unemployment, and appealed to the less well-off by playing on his poor-boy origins in post-war northern Germany. "I know where I come from and I know where I belong," he declared.

With unemployment falling to nearly 4 million after nudging a record 5 million earlier this year, Mr Kohl claimed credit for tackling what is the key election issue.

News in brief

Aung San Suu Kyi's doctors kept away

BURMA'S military government has barred doctors from visiting the opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who is suffering from kidney problems, her political party, the National League for Democracy, said yesterday.

She has entered the 12th day of a protest, camped in a van with three colleagues on a rural road 19 miles from the capital Rangoon.

The regime, which restricts her right to travel outside Rangoon, has refused to let her visit the city of Bassein, where she intended to meet members of her party.

"The personal physicians of Aung San Suu Kyi were not allowed to see her," said Tin Oo, the vice-chairman of the NLD. No reason was given, he said. — AP, Rangoon.

Abacha's son arrested

A TEENAGE son of the late dictator Sani Abacha was arrested at an international airport in northern Nigeria after pointing a pistol at security officers, a newspaper reported yesterday.

Sadiq Abacha was arrested on Tuesday at Kano airport, the Lagos Guardian reported, after pulling out the gun during a routine security check. He was freed after identifying himself as Abacha's son. He had two loaded pistols and an unknown amount of foreign currency. — AP, Lagos.

Hurricane strengthens

A HURRICANE in the Atlantic has strengthened to become a 300-mile-long storm skirting sparsely populated Bahamian islands on a route that could threaten the eastern United States. Meteorologists warned Florida residents to be ready to "take quick action" if Hurricane Bonnie changed course, saying it could hit the coast with winds of more than 110 mph. — AP, Nassau.

Gaudi 'deserves sainthood'

THE Vatican should consider bestowing the Catalan architect Antonio Gaudi, the Archbishop of Barcelona said. The creator of the city's still-incomplete Sagrada Família Cathedral and other eye-catching modernist buildings worked through "deep and constant contemplation of the mysteries of faith", Bishop Ricard Maria Carles told parishioners.

"Antonio Gaudi, architect, universal Catalan and lay mystic, deserves to be studied as a candidate for sainthood," he said. Gaudi died in 1926. — AP, Barcelona.

Card players trump computer

ARTIFICIAL intelligence lost out to humans in the first international bridge showdown between 34 of the world's top players and a computer program called GIB.

Michael Rosenberg, an American aged 44, won the gold medal in the par contest in Lille. GIB, or "Gears in a Box", named in honour of Charles Goren, who helped to popularise bridge in the 1940s — finished in 12th place. Loaded in a personal computer, it had been favoured to win.

About 5,000 players from 80 countries are competing in the World Bridge Championships in the French city. — AP, Lille.

'Lucky' stones injure 800

A TRADITIONAL stone-throwing battle between rival villages in central India left 800 people injured. Twenty-five people were in a critical condition after residents of the two villages near Chhindwara, in Madhya Pradesh state, lined up across a river to hurl stones and abuse at one another. Getting injured is considered a good omen. — AP, New Delhi.

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Sumatran mass graves found

John Aglionby in Jakarta

THE remains of 21 bodies were unearthed from multiple graves at the weekend by Indonesian human rights commissioners in the north Sumatran province of Aceh.

The discovery reinforces locals' claims that atrocities were committed by the army during the regime of the dictator Suharto. Watched by hundreds of people, the investigators dug up 12 sets of remains at one site and nine bodies at three other locations.

Baharuddin Lopa, the team leader and secretary-general of the country's human rights commission, said the remains were incontestable proof of human rights violations.

"I don't want to hear any government official pretend that the widespread killing of civilians during the military operations in Aceh never occurred," he said. He added that one site, at Bukit Sentang in the far north, might contain more than 100 bodies.

The team took the remains to north Sumatra's main city, Medan, for further examination. The exhumations are expected to continue tomorrow. The Jakarta Post quoted

Yusuf Kasim, the village chief in 1991 when many of the victims were buried at Bukit Sentang, as saying he had lost count of the number of people buried there.

He said many of the victims had been brought to the site alive. Some were forced to kneel at the edge of a pit and shot at point-blank range. "Others were shoved into the grave and asked to lay side by side, like the salted fish you see in the market, before their bodies were riddled with bullets," he said.

Local organisations estimate the number of victims at anywhere between 3,000 and 39,000. Most of the killings are thought to have been committed between 1989 and 1992, at the height of the separatist rising. Hundreds of women were reportedly raped by soldiers.

In 1991 Aceh was made a military operations area, giving the army a free rein to crush the separatists. Two weeks ago General Wiranto, the armed forces commander, lifted the special status, apologised for any human rights violations and promised to withdraw all but the local territorial troops. The first batch of special forces left last week.

Alex Bellis in Rio de Janeiro

BBETTER known for its tropical beaches, Brazil is an unlikely home of Scotch whisky.

Clavie Vidiz has collected more than 3,000 different bottles of it, including some more than 100 years old, at his private museum in the industrial city of Sao Paulo.

Now recognised as a whisky expert, he is often consulted by drinks companies as they launch new brands, and the heads of foreign distilleries.

"I agree it's totally crazy," he said. "It would be like me going to Glasgow and finding the world's largest collection of Scotch whisky."

For his work as an ambassador for whisky, Mr Vidiz has been awarded the highest honour by the whisky community. He was made a Keeper of the Scotch in 1991, a title shared with Prince Charles and Ronald Reagan.

In a week's time Mr Vidiz, the retired managing director of a petrochemical

company, will inaugurate the Brazilian chapter of The Keepers of The Quaich, confirming Brazil's importance to whisky culture.

Germany is the only other country with a chapter.

Mr Vidiz built his museum in the 1980s. Next to it he built a Scottish pub, which has original features such as a dartboard, bagpipes and maps of the homeland. He commissioned a Brazilian carpenter to make pub stools based on measurements and designs from Scotland.

The passion for whisky is common in Brazil, where it is regarded as a symbol of luxury. The Association of Brazilian Whisky Collectors has more than 400 members.

The whisky market in Latin America is booming. Exports to Brazil were up 10 per cent per cent last year, making it the second largest market in the region after Venezuela.

Mr Vidiz believes Brazilians and whisky were made for each other, partly because Brazilians love status symbols. "It's just like Scotland here," he said. "If you don't take a very good Scotch to a party, the party will be no good."

Comment

e-mail

Ian Traynor
@Bonn

THEIR hungry faces pressed against the plate-glass of a hugely successful Scandinavian department store, the consumers of Cologne clamoured for entry to the shoppers' temple — hundreds of punters desperate to spend their money confronting electronic doors which defiantly refused to open.

A little notice on the door explained why. "Dear customers, the works council is having a meeting. The store opening has been delayed for two hours." And that was that. Tough luck. Stand around in the wind or rain and wait to be admitted.

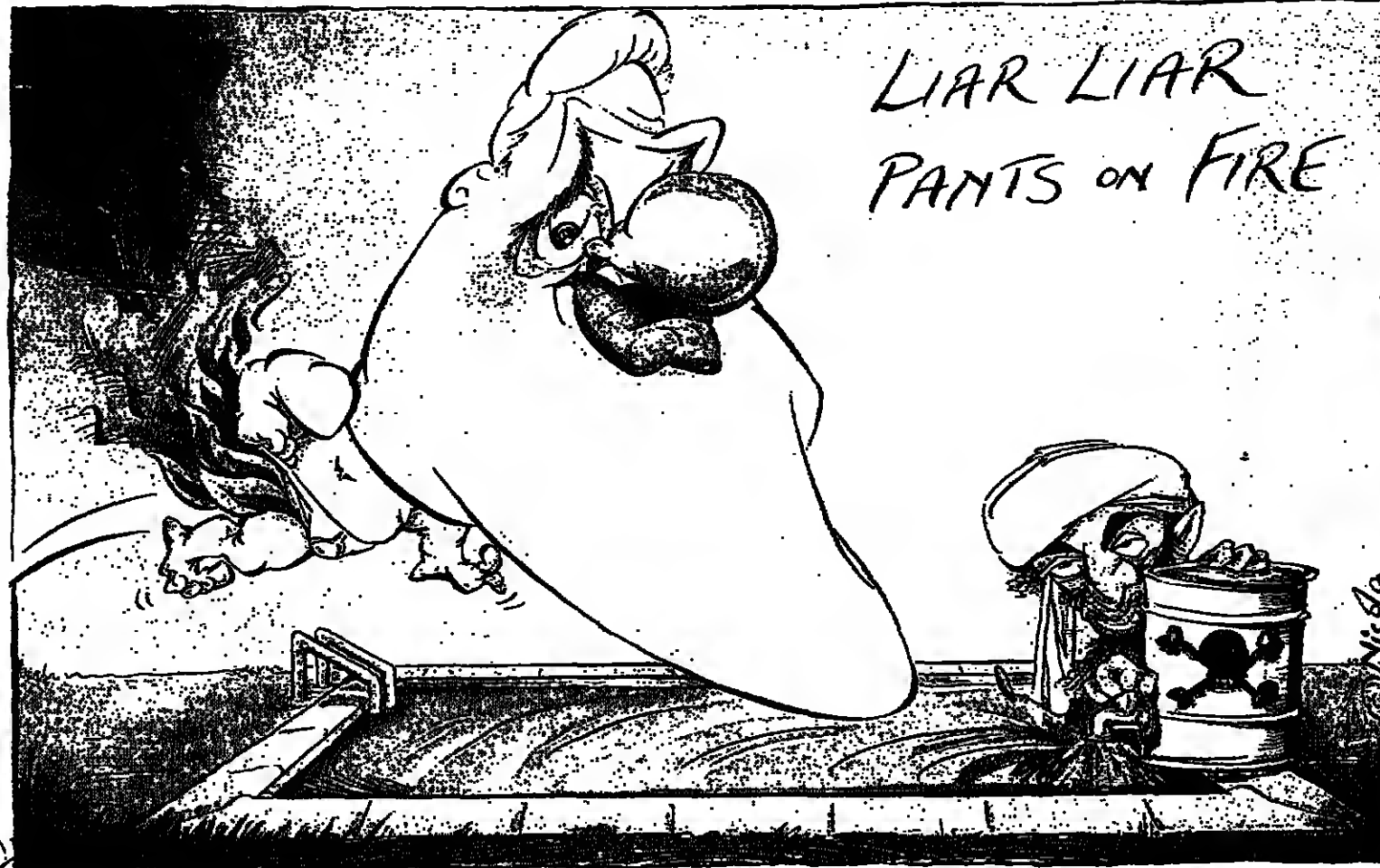
If the megastore seemed less than keen on parting you from your D-marks, you could always try the ubiquitous fruit and veg markets which decorate every German town centre. Except that the vendors are liable to turn apologetic if you finger a peach or a pear. Like the IKEA works council, the market vendors, too, have their notices posted. "No touching", warn the signs and they're meant seriously. "Why?" I asked one potato peddler. His face creased in bewilderment, clearly unused to being questioned. "Don't ask me, you'll need to ask my boss." Orders are orders and rules are rules. If Anglo-Saxon retail philosophy elevates the customer to the status of king, there is nothing royal about the consumer in Germany.

Urgently needing a couple of pounds of potatoes one evening, I slipped out of the office early to rush to the Bonn market where the vendors were packing up at half past five. "Can I have a kilo of those?" I pointed longingly, confronting one stall-owner who gave a credible impression of wanting to sell potatoes. "No," came the curt and devastating reply, "we're taking the rest of the night off." Tough luck.

Ever come across a market vendor who doesn't want to sell you a pound of spuds? Bonn's the place. Or flying to Prague one morning from Cologne airport, I turned up to collect the ticket and did what any "normal" traveller would do — fished out the plastic. "Sorry, no credit cards, cash only." Tough luck, yet again.

IN SHORT, in Europe's mightiest and wealthiest economy, the shopping and bingeing urge is constantly frustrated by an attitude that sees the consumer as a pest. Depending on your point of view, there is a positive aspect to the rampant client hostility. The restrictive shopping hours that so enrage Anglo-Americans living in Germany mean that the country is mercifully spared the shopping mall culture which has conquered Britain, and Sundays are a shopping-free zone.

But despite a modest relaxation of permitted opening hours decided 20 months ago, which, inter alia, allows bakers to sell fresh bread for three hours on Sundays, it's nigh impossible to get your breakfast *Brotchen* on the one day of the week you have the time to enjoy them.



With 'enemies' like these, Clinton needs candid friends — like us

Tony Benn



WHEN the news came through of the savage bomb attacks on the American Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, the whole world was as shocked as by the tragedy at Omagh, and sympathy poured out for the injured and the relatives of those who died. It was a hideous crime that no one can condone and it raises very serious issues in the conduct of international relations to which answers must be found.

But the decision of a beleaguered president to reply by ordering air attacks, with Cruise missiles, against a pharmaceutical factory in the Sudan and targets in Afghanistan has lost much of that sympathy, especially as many innocent people have been killed or injured.

Many of those who understand the strong emotions raised in America, and the demand for action, fear that the US has begun a new cold war against its critics in the Muslim world, branding them all as terrorists. Given the widespread doubts raised about the wisdom of responding in that way, the decision of the Prime Minister to issue an immediate statement of support for these bombing raids is even more astonishing.

Britain is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, charged with acting to deal with all threats to world peace — yet we made no attempt to have the issue raised there. Britain is an active member of the European Union, now pledged to co-operate in international affairs — yet no move was made to seek the views of our partners there.

Britain plays a leading role in a Commonwealth which

includes Muslim states such as Pakistan — but they were not asked for their advice.

Once again we have seen the spectacle of London giving uncritical backing to whatever Washington decides to do — as happened over the Iraq crisis in February when the US and Britain were absolutely isolated in their desire to bomb Saddam.

The parallel with Northern Ireland, where tit-for-tat bombings have been denounced by President Clinton, and a peace process is now under way, comes readily to mind.

And in his Observer article yesterday the Prime Minister made it clear that he did not favour the use of the SAS to "take out known terrorists" — yet that is exactly what Clinton has tried to do.

It is also clear that random "punishment bombings" of nations suspected of being involved in terrorism is contrary to international law and the charter of the United Nations itself, and if adopted by others could lead the world back to the law of the jungle.

At a time when serious consideration is being given to the establishment of a permanent international war crimes tribunal would the innocent victims of these wars be able to take their case there for adjudication? Another impact of this affair which has disturbed fair-minded people is the double standards in Western international policy, where Israel and Turkey are protected by the US at the Security Council while others are denounced.

Osama Bin Laden was trained and funded by the Central Intelligence Agency when the Americans were using fundamentalist Mus-

lims to undermine communism, and when terrorism against Soviet targets made you a freedom fighter. Statements attributed to Bin Laden that all Americans should be killed are part of the same wild rhetoric we heard from Reagan when he described the Soviet Union as an evil empire and won widespread backing from American fundamentalists.

History should surely now have taught us that the only effective weapon against terrorism is diplomacy designed to remove the causes

Muslim anger against the US is a response to its conduct over the Middle East, when regular UN vetoes have been used to protect Israel

of the hatred which fuels it, as we have seen in so many parts of the world.

Muslim anger against America must be understood: it is a response to the conduct of the US over the Middle East, when regular vetoes — 32 in all — have been used to protect Israel at the Security Council, and where Washington has insisted on the maintenance of the cruel sanctions against the people of Iraq, 500,000 of whom have died, when the victims have no power to overthrow the Iraqi Government.

Our "special relationship" with America is based upon the fact that the US supplies us with nuclear weapons and helps us to pretend that they are an independent deterrent — which they are not since without the use of the American global satellite guidance system they cannot be used.

In return we allow the Americans to supervise our own intelligence services, maintain their own nuclear bases here including the spy base at Menwith Camp, and do what they tell us to do.

In November 1950, Prime Minister Clement Attlee flew to Washington to warn Truman not to launch a nuclear attack on Korea, and his mission was successful. That sort of plain talking by one friend to another is what a real special relationship should mean, and we need to hear it again now.

President Eisenhower was an equally candid friend when he ordered Eden to end the Suez war at a time when Britain was being told that Nasser was another Mussolini who had to be stopped at all costs.

If parliament is recalled to enact emergency legislation in Northern Ireland, Ministers must be held to account for their failure to bring some common sense to bear in this dangerous situation before it gets worse.

Meanwhile it would help us all to see our way through these dangers if we studied our history more carefully and encouraged free debates of alternatives.

Tony Benn, the longest serving MP and former chairman of the Labour Party, served in the RAF in the Middle East during the second world war, travelled widely there as Emergency Secretary, and has campaigned to end the sanctions against Iraq.

A war about nothing

Peter Preston



WE FIND them odd, we English, in their obsession with things long past: the glories, the grudges, the Easter rising and the autumn fallings, the battles for forgotten spoils on forgotten spots. They seem cursed by their history. They always remember. They will remember Omagh too.

We are superior beings, we tell ourselves, because no such incubus stays with us. Our castles and state homes are all around, a national trust. But they are merely beautiful objects, without the resonance of life. Our relevance is here and now and our memories are short. That is the modern, rational way to be.

Yet here I am, in an unknown part of a familiar country, Conimont is nothing much, a tiny town tucked away where valleys meet in the southern Vosges of Alsace Lorraine. It has a campanile and a few shops and a tourist office — but the big tourist guides do not recognise its existence. Only death defines Conimont.

There is a bare little square in front of the Mairie and an ugly monument in red stone, redeemed by the flowers which surround it. You come after a three-hour walk for these monuments, to pause in silence before them.

Between 1914 and 1918 — count them one by one — 273 young men from Conimont went to war and died in the trenches of shrapnel and bayonet. Emile and Leon and Paul and Henri and Charles and Albert and Louis and Joseph and Louis and Louis. Four men called Blaise and four more called Pierrat. And 10 — count them again — from the family Gemin.

They are in no sense alone. In Gerardmer, a spa town 20 kilometres north, the memorial is a tower of grey granite, and there are over 340 names to read. In Le Ventron, a hamlet down the road, the pocket handkerchief of a grave-yard remembers 64 local souls who went to war and never returned. Across the valley in Lunel, the list — 215 names long — stands just inside the door of the church.

This is carnage on an unimaginable scale. We know, because we were dryly taught so, that over 10 million people died in the war they called the Great War. We may recall that 900,000 or so of them were British, but we are hazy about the 1.7 million Russians and the 1.2 million young Germans and the 1.2 million called to serve the decaying hulk of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. And in particular, I suspect, we do not realise that nearly 1.4 million French soldiers, their ranks neatly arranged on the stones, marched to their death.

THE memorials of Alsace Lorraine make the contrast between 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 agonisingly clear. It was the first war which killed a generation here. The lists of the second war are only 30 or 40 names long. Just over 214,000 French soldiers died in the war, and just over 284,000 Brits. The suffering in the Soviet Union and Germany was terrible for soldiers and civilians alike: the toll of the Holocaust remains an open wound. But in France, as in Britain, the Great War was the minor.

Take 64 men from a hamlet like Le Ventron and there are only the old and the grieving women left. How is it possible to forget such desolation? It does not come to us across the mists of centuries, the days of King Billy celebrated in sounding brass by men in tight suits. There are still a few, in utmost decrepitude, who remember Verdun and the Somme — just as there are many more in Conimont who were there in the winter of 1944 when the allied armies, and a French general, drove out the Germans once again. Alsace and Lorraine have changed hands and allegiances four times in what we

loosely call the modern history of Europe. How is that to be forgotten?

In many ways, of course, the memories remain. There are the poems of Sassoon and Owen and the histories and the novels. But such remembrances are not true remembrances. They dust with the years and they wither as the people who were there, the people of experience, depart the scene. Very, very soon there will be nobody left, and then what shall we make of the war to end all wars which, in fact, planted the seeds of another?

Few now choose to recall the conflict except in terms of slaughter, of lions led by donkeys. Only the small of the blood lingers. We do not know what this war was about or who started it in any meaningful sense.

We have never seen the first world war whole and we wish to shut it from our minds. The memorials of Alsace have their subsidiary plaques to the dead of Indo-China and Algeria: more fatalities in search of a cause worth raising the flag over. Americans still divide with the lines of their civil war. They think they understand because they know what it was about. But Vietnam? What did that mean? And the Great War is yet more impenetrable. But France, along these valleys, has something to remember that makes sense. Its churches and its public buildings are still pockmarked from the fire of guns. The flowers by the graves are kept fresh every morning. Here the past is not people who died long ago and far away. It is written across the villages where people live.

We, we English, may comprehend little of this. We have moved on. But from Verdun to Strasbourg and down through the Vosges, moving on is not an option. Two monstrous wars in the century that is just end-



We have never seen the first world war whole and we shut it from our minds

ing, our century, have left their scars, and those scars are fresh like the flowers.

When Kohl or Chirac talk of the European Union, they still set its role as a keeper of the peace at the heart of the enterprise. Familiarly, British leaders stretch and suppress a yawn. Is not the peace secured? Aren't these more elderly men entrapped in their own version of history? Yet the history in Conimont is palpable. A new generation of Le Ducs own the local hotel. There are Mougels and Mougels digging in their hillside gardens. The destruction of the Gemin clan is still a shudder of this little town are right to remember. And we, somehow, should strive to remember too.

Remember a war which left 84 million dead, a war borne in blunder and inertia which the statesmen could not control and to which the generals in their braids had no answer. A war of miscalculation and waste and greed and redundant sacrifice. A war about nothing.

Does that sound familiar? Is the Europe of today — and the world of Sudan and Afghanistan — beyond such idiocies? You dare not hope so when you inspect the chronicle of the victims of our greatest, because most meaningless, folly. Sometimes it is not just sensible, but imperative, to remember.

Break this barrier

Endpiece

Roy Hattersley

THE old familiar faces were all there — the postgraduate student who spoke nostalgically of occupations and sit-ins, the lady (with a barely noticeable foreign accent) who believed that we must stand on principle and the trade unionist who promised support and solidarity. Outside the door, there were even men — strangely old for such childish nonsense — selling Socialist Worker. It was just like old times. But sentimentalism, though I am, I felt no joy at returning to the Friends' Meeting House for another protest. Most of the packed hall felt the same. Many of us, who had campaigned against assorted injustices from the poll tax to prescription charges, had hoped that after the general election we would spend our evenings peacefully at home. Last Thurs-

day evening's gathering was not entirely typical of what might be described as the traditional protest. The men and women in the body of the hall were, on average, more erudite than the crowds which had chanted "Maggie, Maggie, Maggie. Out! Out! Out!" And the cause for which we campaigned did not have the emotional appeal of Stop the War Now!

Indeed, it will be dismissed by philistines as not worth national time or effort. For we had gathered together to "keep the British Library free".

That slogan sounds like part of the dialogue for a new film version of 1984 in which a braver and more intellectual Winston Smith fights back against Big Brother by demanding that the Thought Police allow books, not written in New Speak, to be freely available. In fact, we were all objecting to the proposal that the British Library — according to the Act of Parliament under which it now operates, a "national centre for reference, study,

hitherto and other information services" — should introduce admission charges.

The proposed fee is certainly not a fortune. And to many writers — amongst them — it will be well worth paying. But a morning in the manuscript room will convince most observers that £300 is more than some of the men and women working there can pay. They are not derelicts who have come out of the Kuston Road cold, or eccentrics attempting to discover the date of the end of the world, but scholars and writers — or at least potential scholars and writers. The potential will never be realised if they are denied access to the books which they need to read.

It is easy to imagine the British Library as part of this country's literary past — a place where William, Duke of Gloucester, complained to Edward Gibbon, "Another damned, thick, square book! Always scribble, scribble, scribble!" and the reading room in which Karl Marx

brilliantly analysed and woefully misunderstood capitalism. In fact, it is a place where real work is done. The country would be the poorer if some of the men and women who are working there today were priced out by a charge which can be avoided.

Sir John Ashworth (chairman of the British Library and, when he was

Some people working in the British Library can't afford a fee of £300

director of the London School of Economics, principal proponent of the idea that students should pay "top-up" fees) may believe that charging is right in itself — echoing David Ricardo's notion that the "demand for free goods is infinite and, therefore, can never be met in a way which wisely allocates available resources". I, on

the other hand, do not believe that rich writers are the best writers or that rationing by price is the ideal way to distribute learning. What he and I, however, must agree is that an annual entry fee of £300 — estimated to raise £3.6 million in a full year — will make much of a hole in the £20 million deficit. Much good work will be frustrated for what, to the Government, is peanuts.

It is the apparent pointlessness of the enforced sacrifice which worries me the most — more even than the absurdity of spending so much time and money on a magnificent new library and then preventing hundreds (perhaps thousands) of readers from getting any further than Isaac Newton's statue at the gate. That financial decision must have had a sub-text, and I fear it is the view that anything worth having must be paid for.

Unfortunately the idea is contagious. If the British Library charges an entrance fee, barbarians will begin to argue that local li-

braries should do the same. Sooner or later, although European law prevents us from taxing readers, we will be paying for the right to borrow books. Then the libraries will be privatised. Do not say that it cannot possibly happen. We all said that about private prisons.

Last Thursday night all sorts of schemes were advanced for raising the money which would make the fee unnecessary. Some speakers suggested that the European Union should be asked to help. Everybody thought it absurd to spend so much on the Millennium Dome, when so little could solve the British Library's problem. The only practical solution is for Chris Smith — a minister I have been happy to praise in this column — to treat the British Library as he has treated the national museums. He should offer them an extra £25 million a year, dependent on them abandoning the idea of fees. Public opinion would do the rest. Why not write and tell him so?

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Panic stations

Let's take a deep breath

THE NEXT few days are going to take a deep breath by governments and market-makers is needed. Among near-certainties are that there will be response to the American missile strikes; we have re-entered a protracted period of high civil alert. Meanwhile problems of finance and production in Russia are going to worsen while the Japanese "reform package" will be neither speedy in effect nor revolutionary. Yet there is no world crisis. Economic conditions continue to improve on the Continent. American capitalism remains solid. Twin mistakes beckon. One talks about "the world" when problems, economic and political, are intelligible and dealable with regionally. The other raises easy false hope about long-run problems. A self-denying ordinance by those in leadership is called for: avoid programmatic utterances and the promise of big changes in behaviour in the short run.

For example, Chancellor Kohl was precipitate in saying "no more help" for Russia. It is in Germany's long-run interests for a functioning business culture to be established in Russia, whatever the precise form of government there. It is not geo-political fatalism but sound concern for Germany's future that should prompt an attitude of flexibility and patience towards Russia. Self-denial of a different kind is required from our prime minister, too, on his return this week. His tear ducts will do overtime on the approach to the anniversary of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. But Tony Blair above all needs objectively to map national sensibility and public policy. In kinder, gentler post-DI Britain there really is tolerance of inequality and more acceptance that the public good costs tax revenues — or is that mood-swing something for governments to engineer, though not so far this one? Similarly in Ireland, it is impressive how a new mood walks the streets and (oddly late) there is purposeful cooperation between the Irish and British governments. But those murdered a week ago in Omagh are not the first victims identified as harbingers of a new peace. Ireland's kind of civil conflict does not just end, like conventional warfare between states. The die-hards might, this past week, have been running for cover, but they will recover their nerve.

The political settlement that might, finally, marginalise them into the status of bandits is there in outline. But making it work will take marathon and unglamorous talk sessions, the smoothing over of countless difficulties and permanent political courage — like holding to the terms of the Good Friday accord. The West must not let its preoccupation with security during the weeks to come obscure Ireland's greatest lesson. Short of genocide the bases of terrorism will dry up only if there is political accord. Has Islamic fundamentalism really been shown to be so different an historical phenomenon that it escapes entirely the logic of international relations in which states make and keep agreements with one another? The case for Palestinian statehood is a security one. And states, too, are not yet drowned in the depths of international trade and transnational ownership. One of the deadliest legacies of the period of monetarist experiment during the past two decades is economic fatalism, the belief that market forces are inexorable, that prime and finance ministers bob like corks on the seas of globalisation. Political will still matters. Saying that will not of course help the massive task of institutional construction needed in Russia, perhaps also in Japan. Saying that does not invalidate the experience and legitimate

self-interest of bankers and managers of capital. It does, however, suggest the measure of the challenge facing elected leaders in the West this week. Calm deliberation, a vintage British prime minister once said, untangles every knot. As a guide to state-manship that remains the only adage.

New class deal

Schools could get real

THOSE WHO complain about the schools' remoteness from "real life" ought to welcome the Government's proposals for getting the unemployed on New Deal schemes into the classrooms as teachers' aides. What could be more real than life on benefits and schemes so what could be more educational than the insertion of that experience into schools? The unemployed are, after all, well-equipped for education. They know a thing or two about industrial structure, "downsizing", the search for shareholder value, even that delight of central bankers' the non-accelerating inflation rate of unemployment. The New Deal is not, even in the most favourable economic circumstances, even if it offered the most fitting schemes of experience-getting and training, going to guarantee all its graduates get jobs so the presence

of the unemployed in the classroom might offer students a useful glimpse of their own future. Peter Hain, the Welsh Office minister leading on the new scheme, says the unemployed have unused talents. We have to hope he is right but he perhaps should have added they may also need to change their minds about the utility of formal schooling. If unemployment for some people is in some part a result of a bad time in the classroom and academic failure it wouldn't do to have that repeated.

Teachers are, understandably, concerned about dilution and rightly fear a situation in which they spend as much time worrying about their assistant as attending to their students. But with training, these New Deal classroom adjuncts could be a real bonus to schools. Like Romans of old they might sit at the back with rods keeping an eye on discipline. Alternatively they might offer access to that grail of classroom tuition, one to one conversation and attention. But they are going to have to enlist in the culture and approach of the school they are working in. It wouldn't do to have New Deal recruits coming fired with the teaching methods favoured by the school of hard knocks. If (there is argument but the basic point holds) fewer children per adult are engaged in teaching and learning, then more bodies in schools must be reckoned a plus.

Letters to the Editor

Everyone fails to measure up

YOU accuse the examination boards of "a lamentable exercise which would have been failed by any mathematics examiner" (Leader, August 20). They are merely following the example set by successive Education Secretaries, the head of Ofsted and Guardian education correspondents. When national curriculum was introduced level 4 was set at the standard expected of the average 11-year-old and level 2 at that for the average 7-year-old. After the levels have been established the word average mysteriously disappears from later documentation. Result: publishable tests are introduced and — *quelle horreur* — approximately 50 per cent of the country's children are above average and the other 50 per cent below. Obviously this is totally unacceptable and Mr Blunkett, Mr Woodcock and the Guardian have all made it clear that they will continue to slag off teachers until 50 per cent of the country's children are above average. Denis Beaumont, Wolverhampton.

[HAVE obtained A level passes in maths and Spanish, and found each of them to require a high standard of hard work. The Spanish exam took place this summer. The maths exam was in 1995. William Malcolm, Warrington.

SOME weeks ago my electricity company told me they would soon be able to provide me with my gas supply, and it would be cheaper than purchasing it from a gas company. Today I received a communication from my gas company telling me that soon they would be able to provide my electricity company. Would it make more sense if each company were to reduce the price of their product? Or perhaps it might even be better if all public utilities were nationalised. Brian Thompson, Ipswich.

SUPPOSE (Baby to spice up Posh Life, August 22) Victoria Adams knew David Beckham was the father when she felt a reprehensible kick. R E Ferner, Birmingham.

It wasn't self defence

YOU criticise the US bombing of Afghanistan and Sudan (Leader, August 22) solely from the legal perspective of Article 51 of the UN Charter. Since the terrorist attacks in east Africa were not against US territory, US armed forces or a US head of state, they do not constitute an "armed attack" for the purpose of triggering Article 51. Since Article 51 uses the term "inherent", this ensures that the right of self-defence is incorporated into the Charter and pre-dates it. However, this right of self-defence is a precise and limited concept formulated, ironically, by a former US Secretary of State, Daniel Webster, in his celebrated Note of April 24, 1841, requiring Britain to show a "necessity for self-defence, instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means and no moment for deliberation". None of these elements was present to justify the US attacks.

Therefore, we are left with the doctrine of reprisal in order to justify the US action. On April 8, 1964, the Security Council adopted, without dissent, a resolution condemning reprisals as "incompatible with the purposes and principles of the United Nations". The way to deal with an unlawful act is not to retaliate with another unlawful act. This undermines the carefully constructed rules and procedures upon which world order ultimately depends — to the detriment of us all. David A Sager, London.

THE self-defence provisions of the UN Charter are clearly designed to cover circumstances in which it is impossible or unfeasible to refer an act of aggression to the Security Council. For example, in 1990, the Kuwaiti government obviously did not need the permission of the UN to respond forcibly to the Iraqi invasion of their country. Article 51 could also be used to legitimate action if the Security Council is unwilling or unable to act, or in the face of an immediate threat, when delay could bring disaster. None of this applies to the bombing of a chemical factory or a training camp. Not only was this an illegal act, it was politically

stupid, drawing world attention away from the killing of so many innocents in Kenya and Tanzania, and giving the murderers who carried out those actions the political standing they desire but do not deserve. It is sad that the British government should feel obliged to support this unlawful stupidity, especially given the over-reaction of the Foreign Secretary to a relatively minor and benign breach of a UN resolution over Sierra Leone earlier this year. Chris Brown, Professor of Politics, University of Southampton.

SINCERELY hope that Islamic extremists really were behind the "bombs" (Leader, August 22). However, your headline "Clinton takes revenge" (August 21) exposes a human instinct that condemns us to further atrocities. Isn't it clear that if powerful countries do not seek to act justly within the law then they are inviting us to do the same as bringing to justice. How many innocent people have been killed this time? It is a pity that our own government can be so avid a supporter of this alienating strategy. Philip Lodge, St Helena, Merseyside.

ALTHOUGH the formal declaration may be somewhat delayed, we have just seen the beginning of the "third world war". John Griffith, Marlow, Bucks.

WE have all made too much of President Clinton's association with Monica Lewinsky. When Clinton has his hands down his trousers rather than his finger on the button, the world must surely be a safer place. Rebecca Sissons, Horsbarn, West Sussex.

IN the 1960s, the slogan of Bill Clinton's hippy generation was: "Make love, not war". Is he now adopting, in the manner of so many middle-aged apostates, another, opposing, motto: "Make war, not love"? Alan Waters, Lancaster.

pooling. Last year, the US invested almost twice as much in Britain (£9.4bn) as in the rest of the EU, and Britain accounted for two-thirds of all European investment in America. With extra commercial advantages from both allowing US spy bases to operate here and having nuclear power standing thanks to American weaponry and back-up, the priority for Blair between possible reprisals on a few civilians and serious harm to Britain's financial status from criticising Clinton, was easy. It's the economy, stupid. Max Hess, Folkestone, Kent.

LIKE most people, I find it difficult to explain "terrorism". However, your headline "Clinton takes revenge" (August 21) exposes a human instinct that condemns us to further atrocities. Isn't it clear that if powerful countries do not seek to act justly within the law then they are inviting us to do the same as bringing to justice. How many innocent people have been killed this time? It is a pity that our own government can be so avid a supporter of this alienating strategy. Philip Lodge, St Helena, Merseyside.

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Sick and tired of disability myths

WHEN will you stop taking government propaganda uncritically and swallowing it whole (Disabled display at 'benefits cuts', August 22)? This old canard about people deciding to live the life of Riley by going to their friendly GP and getting signed off sick is completely untrue. This was the story put about by the Tories as an excuse to reduce invalidity benefits, which they did some years ago, replacing it with Incapacity Benefit. Access to it is not controlled by GPs. Claimants must fill out a lengthy questionnaire and then go to a medical examination conducted by the Benefits Agency's own doctors. If these are the sympathetic doctors referred to in your story, then I'm sure the Bene-

fits Agency would like to know. In fact, welfare rights workers spend a great deal of time challenging the results of these medical examinations, which are overwhelming against the claimant, and winning a large percentage at appeal. As for there being no review of benefit, that is also plainly wrong. Benefits can be reviewed at any time for a number of reasons. Please stop doing the Government's dirty work for it in publishing this constant stream of malicious, mendacious mythology aimed at destroying the principle of national insurance and making disabled people pay the cost. Rochelle Wilson, Carlton, Nottingham.

Voters go for gold (almost)

ERIC Syddique (Letters, August 21) quotes the low turnout figures for the London County Council to show that there was never a golden age of high turnout in local elections. As he notes, detailed records before 1972 are not easily available. We are compiling inter-war municipal election results, to be published shortly (County Borough Elections in England 1918-38, Ashgate Press), and the findings so far suggest that London was unrepresentative of the country as a whole. For instance, among the first 12 boroughs we have analysed, three had average turnout over the whole period from 1918 to 1938 of more than double the Lon-

don level (Blackburn 70 per cent, Barnsley and Barrow 69 per cent). The lowest figures were for Birmingham and Brighton, both at 38 per cent, but still higher than the 34 per cent for London. For the 12 boroughs combined the average inter-war turnout was 49 per cent. Maybe not a golden age, but silver, perhaps? Sam Davies and Bob Morley, John Moores University, Liverpool.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters; shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

Telling a universal story in the shadow of the Dome

PERHAPS the Dome is not the place to recall the nativity (Leader, August 21). Down the road they are building a permanent settlement — the Millennium Village — where there could be a family centre. The developers, English Partnerships, fully support this proposal. While the faiths prepare for a religious revival away from Greenwich (Holy spirits, August 21), this could be a secular acknowledgement of a universal story: that children, and their parents, need looking after. Dr Sebastian Kraemer, London.

SURELY there is a much simpler and more obvious explanation for the failure of the Roman Catholic Church to

make a contribution to help fund the Spirit Level of the Dome. The Church is at present paying out millions of pounds in damages to children who were victims of perverted priests and nuns. There is not much cash to spare at the moment for spreading the word. Madeleine Simms, London.

I'D BE very careful about the idea of inviting Him to His 2,000th birthday. He might just start tipping things over and saying some pretty rude things about money lenders and all that, and finish up getting crucified. He never was one for zones as far as I can make out. Jack Priestley, Exeter.

Diana and the end of ideology

ANDREW Marr's thesis that the cult of Diana says something about contemporary Britain (The way we are now, August 22) draws the wrong conclusions from the right premise. The Diana myth so perfectly fits our age, not because she became a "radical icon", but because her rapid, de-politicised concern for "victims" and "the suffering" was/is so apposite in the post-ideological 1990s. Her altruism, an emotional

counter-weight to the politics of Blairism, can neither be credited with challenging the Establishment nor re-defining traditional gender roles. Steven Garside, Manchester.

SO, "All next week the Guardian explores the legacy of Diana" (Saturday Review, August 22). Bye bye until the week after, then. Steve Bamber, Warwick.

The Grass Roots and me



Luke Harding

AS A CANDIDATE for Labour's National Executive Committee, I am frequently asked: "Do you really love Tony Blair?" I — and the five other members of the Spartacist Grass Roots Left Beard Alliance — have frequently grappled with this question. The answer, if we look honestly into our hearts, is: No Tony — we don't love you, I'm afraid. The reason was standing on a centre-left NEC slate is

because we believe that the Labour Party should more accurately reflect the views of its members. It is all about democracy, Tony. Some of us — it would be wrong to name names — have been accused of extremism in the past. This charge is deeply wounding and I would just like, if you will bear with me, to set the record straight. I admit that back in 1989 I did offer Tony Benn a salt and vinegar crisp at a meeting of Sicut GND's flourishing Youth Wing. ("Thanks, Luke," he said memorably). I am still very close friends with Ken Livingstone, and we have pledged to die for each other, should the need arise. (Let's hope it doesn't, Ken). I often pop round to Diane Abbott's house for a cup of cocoa. But this hardly amounts to extremism. That odious man Tom Sawyer, who I recently spotted rummaging through my bins with a demonic glint in his eye, has got it all wrong.

True, I was arrested after failing to pay my poll tax back in the 1980s. And true, I did shout "You fascist Thatcher-worshipping son of Satan!" to the magistrate, as they dragged me struggling from the dock. But in the end, if you remember, a very, very close friend paid my fine. (Bless you, Diane, petal). I never went to jail. By this time, the Labour Party was well on its way to becoming a narrow clique of yes-men and — shameful truth — yes-women. For five years, I worked tirelessly as an Islington councillor. In the evening I would set the crossword for Labour Briefing, the left-wing paper, using the Nordic pseudonym: Rhul Gdnhar. Then glory, in all its silky luminousness, beckoned. I remember the date well: Saturday, July 1, 1990. To politics, I was summoned. I was to be a "subversive gesture", I was told, but an "opportunist". It is hardly surprising then, Tony, that I and five fellow Spartacist Grass Roots Left Beards have come together in the way we have. When the Labour Party allowed ord-

inary members to vote for six places on the NEC for the first time, we seceded our opportunity. The truth about New Labour, I am sorry to say, is that people like Tom Sawyer don't like it up them. I was staggered when he recently described me on radio as a "frightening Trot". This from the former Nupe official who, during the tumult of local elections, personally took it upon himself to stop the dead from being buried! I remember vividly him sitting on a coffin, cheerily pouring out a cup of coffee from his Thermos flask. I have to say I was very heartened last week when Roy Hattersley announced in the pages of this Very Newspaper that he might just vote for me. He later sent me a kindly letter on House of Lords headed note paper. It read: "Roy is a total-faced creep. Keep the faith, Luke. Best wishes, your friend, Roy." It would be wrong of me to denigrate any individual

members of the Blairite "Members First, Second and Third Group", against whom we are vigorously campaigning. But it is true that Diana Jonda never shuts up, and that Michael Ashcroft is just a washed-up Irvine hasbeen. You underestimate us at your peril, Tony. Remember what befell the lupine Peter Mandelson last year, when we — the rank and file — refused to give him a place on the NEC, ha ha. Remember Cardinal Wolsey, another great man who rose, only to fall? The decision to allow members to vote by telephone for the first time was a smart move. You thought you had us all stretched up. Little do you know, however, that our crack underground team of telephone operatives are already hard at work. Even now they are pushing the buttons which will get me elected and bring the prospect of a fairer, more caring society just that teeny weeny bit closer.

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Dr Poole... biological 'ignorance' has contributed to the inferior status of women through history

Margaret Joyce Poole

Ethics of birth

MARGARET Joyce Poole, doctor and writer on medical ethics, who has died aged 73, was a practising Catholic who challenged the church on moral theology in the light of developments in biological sciences over recent decades.

Her interests ranged from in-vitro fertilisation, embryo research, abortion and contraception to euthanasia (all forbidden by the Catholic church). Her views clashed with church teaching on the instant "ensoulment" of the embryo at the moment of conception. This stance, she felt, had a medieval ring, dating from a time when the church believed that the whole genetic inheritance of offspring was contained in the male seed. "Ignorance," she wrote, "of the human ovum and its genetic importance has contributed to the inferior status of women throughout history."

She argued that debate should centre around the concept that regarded the soul not as a separate "infused" entity at one moment but rather as the gradual development of a living organism. This argument was used by Mary War-

nock and her team in the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act of 1990. If embryonic cells during the first 14 days are not yet differentiated, how can there be a "personal presence" within these cells? Joyce's interpretation of embryology might have provided acceptability within the church to permit termination of early pregnancies.

Her agenda was brave in the face of the current traditionalist backlash in Catholic hierarchical thinking, and brought her personal criticism. Within the medical profession, colleagues appreciated the scrupulous respect for reality which underlined all her reflections while within the church, where her arguments were often far from welcome, her compassion for individuals, her characteristic insistence on giving serious consideration to the facts, and her unfailing courtesy in replying to critics, gave her writing moral authority which even those who disagreed with her could not ignore.

Joyce was born in Galashiels in the Scottish Borders and graduated in medicine in Edinburgh in 1947. Her unique quality of inquiry was recog-

nised by Sir James Learmonth, professor of surgery at Edinburgh University, who invited her to join his team. One morning after a busy night on call, Joyce was found by the professor asleep in the duty room with her head on the lap of Dr Geoffrey Poole, her husband-to-be. Instant dismissal followed. It was an age when single women were barely tolerated on surgical teams; married women were anathema.

SHE moved to paediatric researching treatments for children with severe burns, which kindled her interest in brain death and decisions to withdraw artificial life-support. After the birth of her four children, she worked as a general practitioner, but it was early retirement in 1976, because of ill-health, which gave her the opportunity to write on ethical dilemmas. She always drew on her practical experience and, while loyal to the church, she also proclaimed the authority "which resides in those of us who have a lifetime listening in close and frank contact to the problems of ordinary people".

no easy answers to many dilemmas resulting from scientific advancement, and she acknowledged that the Christian doctor must carry "the cross of uncertainty" when trying to balance the needs of patients against those arising from Christian norms and, in the case of the Catholic doctor, against the specific teaching of the magisterium of the church.

"But," she wrote, "when the teaching of the church on ethical matters is out of tune with current human experience, a real conflict is set up with those who count themselves committed Catholics." Her first book was characteristically called *The Cross of Uncertainty*, renamed by her American publisher as *The Harm We Do*.

Joyce bravely articulated the dilemma, felt by many in the church, that its image and true significance are being discredited by inappropriate pronouncements on matters based on dubious science. She is survived by her husband and children.

Dorothy Logan

Margaret Joyce Poole, doctor, born January 31, 1925; died August 8, 1998

David Clark

Roll the alternative presses

THE journalist David Clark, who has died of cancer aged 53, was never happier than when he had a paper to run. There was Grass Eye in the 1960s, the Leveiler in the 1970s and more recently the Southwark News.

He was a moving force behind the Leveiler, the independent radical magazine founded in 1976, which ran until the early 1980s. "DC" had inexhaustible optimism and catching enthusiasm. He was of the 1968 generation, and was featured, en route for London from Manchester, in a Granada TV documentary on the October 1968 protests against the American war in Vietnam and the subsequent march through London.

A Southend grammar-school boy, he went to Manchester University to read economics in 1964. But his great love was always journalism. In Manchester, he set up Grass Eye, a magazine that became part of the radical publishing wave of the late 1960s. With its closure in 1970, he became a researcher for Thames TV's *Tonight* news show in London. Then in 1972, he quit to freelance



Clark... always the radical pressman

for local/trade papers and for national like the Observer. But his next move was to become deputy editor at the radical magazine *Race Today*. There, in a cramped Brixton office, he worked closely — and established an enduring friendship — with the then editor Dariusz Howe. David was drawn to the politics of the Caribbean and retained a love for its music — and for the emerging black British poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson and Benjamin Zephaniah.

Later, David was stung by the failure of the Leveiler to make the journalistic and political impact he, and

many other people had hoped it would. In 1982, he returned to television, as a reporter at Diverse Productions, one of the first of the independent companies prompted by the birth of Channel 4.

In the mid-1980s, after briefly reporting for London's LBC radio station, he decided to go back to his grassroots, and set up a local news agency. Partly out of familiarity, partly out of love of the challenge, he chose to focus on Southwark, London's most ancient suburb on the south bank of the Thames. He created the South East London News agency and later a local

newspaper, Southwark News. For the past 11 years, the paper was David's life. He sought the stories, raised the cash and took in the adverts. He signed up trainees and encouraged them when they went on to better-paid and more prestigious jobs. He sacrificed a lot for the News, his health included.

While rooted in the alternative culture, David never forgot his upbringing, which had given him a very clear sense of morality and social justice. At times his pungent advocacy of his views irritated people, but anybody who knew him well found a loyal, genuine friend. On the News he defended changes in his political outlook, but he never lost his conviction that people deserved to be better informed by journalists. And he was an amusing companion who had a big heart and sense of fun.

He is survived by his parents, and by his son and former wife.

Nick Anning

David Anthony Clark, journalist, born February 16, 1945; died August 13, 1998

A Country Diary

NORTH RONALDSAY, ORKNEY: The fulmar is a gull-like seabird whose purged white face and neck, neatly domed head-shape and dark eye give it a soft, almost benign appearance. It is one of Scotland's commonest seabirds, yet in the late 19th century the only British population occurred on St Kilda. Some unknown mechanism — possibly increases in marine otol from fishing and whaling activities — triggered a steady southward advance until the bird now breeds on cliffs in the English Channel.

In North Ronaldsay, fulmars nest on the ground, snuggling down on their single white egg in the shelter of the sheep dyke — a 20-kilometre-long wall that

completely encircles the island. In August their well-grown youngsters present an amusing spectacle. Fat and squat with a scrawny reptilian neck and covered in dirty-grey down, they look just like Gozzos off *The Muppet*. But if threatened, they lurch the head out and sway like a snake, then proceed into a retching action that ends in a jet of foul-smelling green oil.

This extraordinary defence mechanism can disable or even kill eagles and peregrines. Although I love the immatures, it's the image of their parents that I'll take away. On one gale-force south-westerly they were passing the island at around 2,500 an hour.

Fulmars have a dramatic flight action that makes economic use of the wind and the sea's troughs and swells. The birds scythe down with the wind, then loop back up with breast facing into the air-flow, before planning back into the troughs once more. Most of the energy in this forward momentum comes from the wind and from gravitational pull.

It struck me that had these birds been absent from this ocean scene, it would simply have been a violent chaos of wind and wave; but with fulmars present, the Atlantic seemed tamed and acquired the order and rhythm of a neatly interlarded dance.

MARK COCKER

Birthdays

Paul Barker, writer and broadcaster, 63; A.S. Byatt, novelist, 62; Charles Causley, poet and broadcaster, 81; Lord Chadlington, advertising guru, 56; Brian Cotter, Lib Dem MP, 60; Carlo Carley, organist, 46; Fred Terry Dowling, graphic designer and illustrator, 82; Stephen Fry, actor, writer, 41; Jean-Michel Jarre, composer, 50; Georgina Livingston, landscape architect, 57; Rt Rev Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Bishop of Arundel, 66; Madeline Parris, director, Adam Smith Institute, 58; Christopher Rodriguez, chief executive, Bradford and Bingley Building Society, 48; Sam Torrance, golfer, 45.

Nino Ferrer

The singer who no longer loved his songs

NINO Ferrer, the French singer and composer who has committed suicide and considerable success in the 1960s with his like *Mirza*, *Le Téléphone* and *Madame Robert*, and in the 1970s with *La Maison près de la Fontaine* and *Le Sud*. But from the mid-1980s, he was seen and heard less. When his suicide was announced, many French people from very different generations found his name familiar but could not quite readily place it.

Yet he was not an entertainer who had lost his audience. He was someone who was discontented with success. More than that, he despised what audiences applauded the most. Ferrer had new songs which he wanted the audience to hear, but they demanded that he sing the golden oldies like *Le Téléphone* or *Les Cornichons* (about cherries), and he longed to leave and slam the door behind him.

Ferrer was born Agostino Ferrari in Genoa. His father was Italian and his mother French, from a family that had lived in New Caledonia. Educated both in Genoa and in Paris, he was unsure about his nationality. As he grew up, he had no clear idea about a career until he heard jazz during the 1950s. He helped organise a band and started to play guitar. At various times, he also played bass, clarinet, saxophone and trombone.

He began writing and performing songs. Sometimes he sang in a raucous voice, sometimes he had to adapt his voice to a melody in which the words were comic and the alliteration complex and extraordinary, and often he re-

dered a ballad-like piece with great tenderness. He absorbed many influences, such as New Orleans jazz, rhythm 'n' blues, swing, Brazilian rhythms, English pop and hard rock. At the end of the 1960s, he performed successfully in Italy, he revelled in wealth and fame, and his disc



Ferrer... despised what audiences most wanted to hear

sales were excellent. But disillusion was never far away. Even when he was enjoying himself as a star and preparing new ventures, he could not believe that life was only publicly, applause, fighting with record companies and competing with supposed friends. He was disconcerted

to find his music was used to advertise Kraft cheese in Italy. He could not understand why some of his songs were successful while those that he considered to be infinitely better were ignored.

Ferrer was filled with public resentments, too. He was alarmed by the stockpiling of nuclear weapons, and he had a well-known hatred of technology. In one of his last songs, *La Danse de la Pluie*, he grouped together "the unsinkable Titanic", Zeppelins and the Maginot Line, that failed hi-tech French defence against Hitler.

In 1985, he walked away from it all, and moved to the small village of Saint-Cyprien in the Lot, devoting himself to his family, to painting, to nature. He opposed the army using his land for manoeuvres. He resented the new capitalists who had taken over traditional agriculture. But he never actually joined any political party or environmental group.

The art of the song in France appeals at all levels of cultural appreciation. There are songs which are literary. There are those which appeal to a more popular taste. But Ferrer never found his right place in this hierarchy. He could not face his 64th birthday, especially after the death of his mother earlier this year. He had long rejected the Catholic church but he sought for some moral sense, and his birthday is one of the great feasts of the Catholic church. Two days before, he lay down in a corn field and shot himself.

Douglas Johnson

Nino Ferrer, singer, born August 15, 1934; died August 13, 1998

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

IN A report headed, Celebrations well in hand beyond the Dome, Page 6, August 19, we said, "In last week's edition, August 18, after mentioning the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York in 1993, referred to the bombing of Nagasaki 'nearly 30 years earlier'. That should have been 'nearly 50 years earlier'.

IN A report on the Finance and Economics page, Page 21, August 21, we referred to the £250,000 prize for Vikram Seth's advance-winning novel, *A Suitable Boy*. Although undoubtedly worth

every penny, the book is actually called *A Suitable Boy*.

IN AN item in the Screen section of the Friday Review, Page 14, August 21, we attributed the words, "Klaatu barado nikto" to the robot Gort in the film, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. As several readers point out, Gort is mute. The words are spoken by the alien character who has arrived on Earth, played by Michael Rennie.

ON PAGE 12, G2, August 18, we identified one of a series of "big-screen Nazis" as

James Fox. It was, in fact, his brother Edward Fox playing that particular movie character.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Please quote date and page number. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor by telephoning 0171 235 9500 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Send letters to the Readers' Editor, The Guardian, 119, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Fax: 0171 235 9897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

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From Red menace to free-market bolsheviks, page 11

Tomorrow: Winners and losers on the Moscow debt repayment roulette

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Finance Guardian

Rail regulator 'to go'

Prescott seeks scalp for failings of privatisation

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

THE Government may sack the rail regulator, John Swift, using him as the sacrificial lamb for a high-profile industry which is continuing to underperform and whose public image is perceived to have worsened since privatisation.

Government sources last night confirmed that ministers are still considering whether to renew Mr Swift's five-year contract due to expire in November. The sources indicated that the final decision rests with the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, to whom Mr Swift is answerable.

Mr Swift, a 57-year-old competition lawyer appointed by the Tories, has confirmed that he is still waiting for a

decision. He wants to remain in the job, but says that he had not expected to bear until after the publication of the Government's transport white paper.

But this occurred more than a month ago, and there was nothing in the white paper that revealed the Government's thinking on the future of the rail regulator. Under laws still to be enacted, he will be given a stronger economic function and some of his powers will be handed over to the proposed strategic rail authority.

Mr Prescott, who is under growing pressure to make an example of the railways, could enjoy a short political coup by getting rid of Mr Swift. The Deputy Prime Minister needs a scalp and Mr Swift could prove to be the ideal victim.

Mr Prescott would like to

plough ahead with new legislation to control the industry more effectively and to launch his strategic rail authority to provide the vision and planning it badly needs. He also wants to give passengers a better deal and an improved service — which official statistics show they are not getting.

But Mr Prescott has so far failed to secure a positive assurance from the Prime Minister that a railways bill will be introduced in the new parliamentary session, beginning in October.

If that happens, Mr Prescott may have to wait more than two years before he can seriously improve the industry's performance. He has little room for manoeuvre, since the Prime Minister has no intention of rationalising the railway industry.

Mr Swift has not enjoyed a

comfortable relationship with Mr Prescott. He has the authority to be much tougher with Railtrack, the private monopoly responsible for track and signalling which has quickly become one of the City's top performers.

But Mr Swift has been criticised for not insisting that Railtrack spends more on investment while its profits have risen consistently.

Sir Robert Horton, Railtrack's chairman, has batted away Mr Swift's threats of action by saying that it takes time to adjust from a nationalised industry into one operating free of public sector constraints.

Mr Swift has tried to endear himself to Mr Prescott by firing the 25 train operating companies for running an inferior telephone timetable service, but on other issues he has stepped back from

using his already considerable powers. John O'Brien, the rail franchise director, whose job will eventually disappear when the strategic rail authority is set up, has suddenly adopted a far tougher public role under instructions from Mr Prescott.

Mr O'Brien, who is supposed to ensure that the train companies provide the travelling public with the best possible deal, last week ordered Chiltern Railways to pay back £2.5 million for defaulting on its services.

Some surprise was expressed in industry circles that he had chosen to single out a small company when he should have made an example of some of the larger companies. Further action against the large railway commuting companies in London is set to follow.

American Notebook

Fresh Apple bites back at Gates



Mark Tran

APPL Computer and Netscape Communications suffered their death experiences competing against Microsoft, but both are making a comeback by adopting new strategies, showing that it is possible to survive against the computer software giant.

Sales of Apple's new, egg-shaped and translucent blue and white iMac computer are booming, with the help of a \$100 million (\$60 million) marketing blitz.

Aggressively priced at \$1,299, the iMac at last is a product competitively priced against personal computers running Microsoft's ubiquitous Windows operating system. Analysts estimate Apple could sell 800,000 iMacs this year, a crucial step in boosting Apple's world-wide market share, hovering around 4 per cent, down from a high of 10 per cent at its peak.

Things are looking up at Netscape as well. The company that pioneered the use of browsers for navigating the World Wide Web last week surprised Wall Street with a small third-quarter profit, a sign that it has found its way after months of uncertainty.

After a meteoric rise three years ago, Netscape found itself in Microsoft's sights and saw its share of the Internet browser market steadily whittled down to 50 per cent from 80 per cent.

But like Apple, Netscape changed direction and its position stabilised. It probably has not hurt Apple and Netscape that Microsoft has to contend with a landmark anti-trust battle with the US Department of Justice next month. Apple and Netscape have won some breathing space, but they cannot afford any complacency in a fast-moving market.

EVEN high-tech titans like Intel cannot let their guard down. Intel's position no longer looks so unassailable with the fast-growing market for computers costing less than \$1,000.

This market threatens to erode Intel's profit margins, and has given renewed hope to its competitors. Bowing to the winds of change, Intel is due to unveil perhaps as soon as today a line of chips for inexpensive computers and regain market share in this burgeoning sector. On top of falling computer prices, Intel has to cope with falling demand for PCs and chips due to Asia's economic doldrums.

In a particularly auspicious development for Apple, the company that popularised the use of personal computers, early surveys indicate that 20 per cent were buying their first computer. It means that Apple is reaching new users. Apple says it has received more than 150,000 advance

orders for the iMac, while Apple's price is pushing a 52-week high of around \$42. The iMac could bring Apple its third successive profitable quarter. A year ago, it was drowning in red ink.

The turnaround has bolstered the credibility of Steve Jobs, Apple's legendary co-founder returned to the fold a year ago in a last throw of the dice to save the faltering company. Mr Jobs earlier this year was criticised for not taking up the offer of permanent chairman and catching the incongruous title of interim chairman. That criticism has subsided as he has restored Apple's profitability and morale, although long-term prospects remain dicey.

Apple's aggressive sales now is that many consumer software programmes do not run on Macintoshes. Someone wanting to play the latest computer baseball game will have no joy with the ultra-fast iMac. Those games run only on Windows software. That was why Mr Jobs made a pact with the devil last year, in a deal to ensure that Microsoft would continue writing software for Mac.

The iMac is a crucial component in Mr Jobs's campaign to turn around the company. Booming sales would indicate that there is strong and growing appetite for Mac computers — a development which could persuade more programmers to write software for Apple's computers.

UNLIKE Apple, there was no change in leadership at Netscape, where Jim Barksdale remains as president. Netscape's dominance of the Web browser market crumbled once Microsoft began giving its own browser away. Netscape shifted strategy by developing Internet software for businesses and by giving its own browser as well.

Netscape's sales of software to businesses or its enterprise segment was flat in recent quarters, but is showing signs of a pick-up. Sales of software to business rose 15 per cent to \$11.6 million from \$9.6 million in the quarter ended April 30. Netscape has also capitalised on the popularity of its Web site, one of the most visited sites on the Web.

Netscape has been attempting to transform its site into a portal or mega Web site by adding content, email and other offerings in order to attract advertising and other revenues. In doing so, Netscape is competing against other companies developing portals, notably Yahoo! and Lycos, which have seen their share price soar until recently amid investor enthusiasm for Internet commerce.

Netscape saw a sharp increase in revenues at the company's Netcentre Internet site in its third quarter.

The problem for Apple and Netscape is that they are minnows compared to Microsoft, and have much less room for error. Microsoft was late in appreciating the importance of the Internet, but once Bill Gates saw his mistake he threw the company's massive resources in a new direction and a near-term comeback is crushing Netscape. That is the danger of playing in the land of the giants.

Child's eye view of the storm

AS SOUTH Korean boy eyes riot police on a street from a Hyundai car factory in the southern city of Ulsan as management and union leaders inch towards a settlement to a crippling three-month strike.

The industrial action has been the longest and among the costliest in the group's history, with the loss of more than 100,000 vehicles. The dispute has centred around the axing of hundreds of posts and has highlighted how difficult it is for Korean companies to cut costs through redundancies, a step considered essential in shoring up their finances from the country's deepest recession since the 1950-53 Korean War.

Samsung Group, Korea's second-largest business group, which is reported to be planning 15,000 lay-offs, has been closely watching developments at Hyundai. It is also a test case for President Kim Dae Jung's economic reform programme.

PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL BARKER



Markets braced for Russian fall-out

Laurie Laird

STOCK markets around the globe are braced for another bout of extreme volatility this week as the systematic financial crisis that has already battered the Far East continues to engulf Russia.

All eyes were on the opening of the Asian markets for an initial reaction to last night's surprise decision by

Russian President Boris Yeltsin to sack his entire government after just four months.

Yeltsin replaced Prime Minister Sergei Kiriyenko with the previous incumbent, Viktor Chernomyrdin.

His appointment may not cheer investors as Chernomyrdin is a Soviet-style bureaucrat, and not considered a proponent of rapid financial reform. It is uncertain how the new government will affect at

tempts by the finance ministry and central bank to hammer out a repayment schedule with foreign creditors. Early last week, Russian announced a 90-day debt moratorium on as much as \$1 billion of debt.

This sent world markets into a tailspin, with the FTSE 100 slumping by 190 points on Friday — its sixth-biggest fall in percentage terms.

America's Dow Jones Industrial Average was down

330 points early on Friday, before recouping a portion of that loss to close nearly 80 points lower. In Germany — perhaps the country most exposed to Russian debt — the benchmark Xetra DAX index lost 5.4 per cent of its value.

Many economists believe the disruption to world markets caused by Russia's troubles could be dwarfed by a meltdown in Latin America.

The latest victim is Venezuela, an oil-rich country that

has been battered by this year's drop in crude oil prices. The country's finance minister admitted in a newspaper interview yesterday that the government's decision to widen the trading band of the national currency, the bolivar, amounted to a "sort of devaluation".

The move, announced on Friday, prompted fears of a wave of devaluations throughout the region.

A collapse in Latin America

is likely to have much more dramatic implications for the world economy than the Russian debacle. The region accounts for about 6 per cent of world output, compared to just 1 per cent for Russia.

Latin America also buys 15 per cent of US exports. Should that market evaporate, big manufacturers will suffer. That will knock the US stock market, and where that goes, most of the world's markets will follow.

Scottish Power in £4bn merger talks

Keith Harper

SCOTTISH Power last night confirmed that it wants to strengthen its position in the United States market after it emerged that it is in negotiations with the Cincinnati-based gas and electric company, Cinergy, about a \$4 billion merger.

The British utility company refused to deny that it was negotiating with Cinergy in a move which could create a group valued at more than £10 billion.

A Scottish Power spokesman said: "We are looking at a number of American companies, and these latest reports about Cinergy are just an example of speculation surrounding our plans."

A merger between the two firms would turn Scotland's largest electric and gas utility into one of the first rank of power companies. It would combine Cinergy's power and gas businesses in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky.

But the move could come

up against regulatory opposition in Britain.

Cinergy holds a 50 per cent stake in Midlands Electricity, the central England generator, and Scottish Power owns Manweb, the North-west's regional electric company.

Industry sources suggested yesterday that the regulator could be against the common ownership of two regional energy suppliers.

Glasgow-based Scottish Power shelved a \$3 billion bid for Florida Progress Corp, a US electric company, earlier this year because the price being asked was too high. But it is still determined to find an American partner.

Cinergy has already held talks with PowerGen, one of Britain's largest generating companies — which, like Scottish Power, wants to find an American partner.

But the talks collapsed partly because of strains between Cinergy's chief executive, Jim Rogers, and PowerGen's chairman, Ed Wallis, who are both strong characters and did not get on well.

Reed Elsevier in £33m books sell-off

Financial Staff

REED ELSEVIER yesterday completed its withdrawal from consumer publishing by selling the group's Illustrated books division to its management for £33 million.

The ax businesses manage 2,000 titles and 500 authors, including Sir Terence Conran's *The Essential Garden Book*, Hugh Johnson's *Pocket Wine Guide*, Mitchell Beazley's *The Joy of Sex* and the Mark & Spencer cookery publications.

The managers have formed a new company, Octopus Publishing Group, to continue the operations which last year had sales of \$45 million.

The division, which has 240 staff, has its roots in the early 1970s when publishing mogul Paul Hamlyn launched the Octopus book company.

Derek Freeman, who has worked with Octopus since its formation, said: "It has been hard for staff over the last three years of uncertainty, but this deal will be really good for them."

Royal Ordnance jobs threatened

David Gow
Industrial Editor

BRITISH Aerospace may be forced to close its Royal Ordnance plant at Bishopston, near Glasgow, threatening 330 jobs after losing a crucial Ministry of Defence contract to a South African rival, industry sources said yesterday.

The £100 million deal to supply propellant was awarded to a South African firm, the Army's new front-line big gun, the AS90 Howitzer, is expected to be awarded to the Denelcor corporation at the end of October.

Closure of the Bishopston plant would be the second blow to RO's workforce within weeks. Earlier this month, BAE said it would cut 475 jobs at seven plants owned by the arms manufacturer, including 199 at its Nottingham factory alone.

The MoD had been thought likely to announce the winner of the contract this week or next, but is now under pressure to insist that some of the workload in producing the shell's propellant is given to RO. Ministers have been told that Bishopston requires at least 10 per cent of this work to ensure its survival.

The Government has also been warned that if the Scottish plant closes, the UK will have lost its capability for providing large-calibre propellant and will be wholly dependent on overseas suppliers.

To protect a small part of Britain's manufacturing base, BAE acquired RO in 1987. Since then it has cut the workforce from just over 4,000 from more than 15,000. It has reduced overheads and labour costs by 35 per cent.

But while export sales have doubled to 60 per cent of turnover, annual sales to the MoD have declined from £350 million to £150 million.

The firm says RO has been hit by the decline in spending since the end of the cold war. But it also blames overseas competition, particularly from state-subsidised firms.

Dixons's rising star hired to revamp Argos

Laurie Laird

TERRY DUDDY, a rising star in the Dixons retail empire, is set to take the helm of the struggling catalogue retailer Argos.

It has been without a chief executive since being taken over by Great Universal Stores three months ago, after a very bitter takeover battle.

Mr Duddy, 42, currently the managing director of Dixons's PC World chain, has his work cut out, with sales falling at a rate of 400-plus stores. Even the recently departed chief executive Michael Rose, who led the Argos defence against GUS, once said the catalogue retailer "treats its customers like faecal matter."

First among Mr Duddy's tasks will be to oversee Argos's trials of its home delivery service, launched last month in the North-west. He will also seek to address the company's sales cycles, analysts say Argos depends far too heavily on Christmas sales.

City experts also believe GUS wants to brighten up Argos' somewhat dowdy image.

Allied Carpets tread with care

This week

Tony May

ALLIED Carpets' results will be overshadowed by the simultaneous release of the results of the inquiry by its auditors, Arthur Andersen, into accounting irregularities.

Last week's announcement of the resignations of finance director David Pout and retail operations manager Steve Barber increased expectations that the inquiry's findings will be fairly damning.

The departures came five weeks after Allied Carpets disclosed that some of its outlets had deviated from its stated accounting policy by recording sales before products were delivered to customers. At the time, Allied Carpets requested a suspension of its shares at 74½p.

Three weeks ago Ray Nethercott, Allied Carpets' managing director, admitted that more than half of Allied's 268

stores had booked sales earlier than allowed for under its stated accounting policy. He said the group would take a £23 million exceptional charge.

Despite the focus on the inquiry findings, analysts point out that of far more importance will be news of current trade and Allied's strategy to mitigate the deteriorating consumer climate.

In its profit warning of May 15, Allied said full-year results to June 1997 were expected to be considerably below last year's £16.7 million and complained of "a distinct lack of consumer confidence".

TODAY — International BGF, Freepage Group (33), Gowling, Hambro Countrywide, Jumbo International, Levenson Group, NSD Retail.
WEDNESDAY — Interhome Aggro, Cairn Energy, Gilbey & Dandy, Irish Permanent, Kiosk Group, Remyx, Vynul.
THURSDAY — Interhome Aggro, Cairn Energy, Gilbey & Dandy, Irish Permanent, Kiosk Group, Remyx, Vynul.
FRIDAY — Interhome Aggro, Cairn Energy, Gilbey & Dandy, Irish Permanent, Kiosk Group, Remyx, Vynul.
SATURDAY — Interhome Aggro, Cairn Energy, Gilbey & Dandy, Irish Permanent, Kiosk Group, Remyx, Vynul.
SUNDAY — Interhome Aggro, Cairn Energy, Gilbey & Dandy, Irish Permanent, Kiosk Group, Remyx, Vynul.

Russia's great leap to chaos



Larry Elliott

Laissez-faire Leninists usher in a new menace

THE collapse of the Soviet Union was a sweet moment for the West. All those years of the Cold War, of being worried about the Red Army goose-stepping into West Germany were suddenly and spectacularly over. Like all victors in wars, the West had the chance to be generous and vindictive. And like nearly all victors, it chose wrong.

At the end of *A People's Tragedy*, his monumental study of the Russian Revolution, historian Orlando Figes warned that "it is by no means a foregone conclusion that the emerging civil societies of the former Soviet bloc will seek to emulate the democratic model. This is no time for the sort of liberal-democratic triumphalism with which the collapse of the Soviet Union was met in many quarters in the West."

Sadly, that is precisely what has happened: an attempt to transform a command economy into a pure market economy overnight.

But this, remember, was the end of the 1980s. Mrs Thatcher was in her pomp, the economy of the West was enjoying a boom, the doctrines of Milton Friedman were being followed everywhere.

As such, the Lenins of laissez-faire believed that they could short-circuit the historical process. They were wrong. Free-market Bolshevism has taken Russia to the edge of the abyss.

Since 1990, the Russian economy has shrunk by more than 40 per cent as most of the country's woefully inefficient industry has been wiped out by foreign competition. Output of lorries, for example, is down by more than 80 per

cent, that of fridges and freezers by more than 70 per cent. But the Great Leap Forward to a market economy has put the state finances under chronic pressure.

The failure to pay wages has become so acute that the teachers have gone on strike, and the country has lapsed back into a barter economy, making it difficult to collect taxes — even for the baseball-bat wielding, balacava-hat-wearing heavies sent in by the government to persuade those in arrears to cough up.

For those visitors taking snaps of St Basil's Cathedral, this gloomy picture may seem at odds with the outward signs of Western prosperity. But as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) admits: "The vitality displayed in Moscow City has certainly nurtured some casual travellers' impressions."

It was obvious from the start that there needed to be something akin to a Marshall Plan for Russia to embed the reform process

open society before the closed society collapsed. All it would have taken was some positive reinforcement for Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*.

Soros argues, rightly, that western assistance to Russia has gone through three phases. "In the first phase, we should have offered assistance, but we didn't. In the second phase, we promised it, but we didn't deliver it. In the third phase, we delivered it, but it didn't work."

And so, for all the claims from the disciples of pure laissez-faire that the shock treatment was paying off, the Russian government was faced

earlier this month with a situation in which GDP had resumed its decline, with lower oil prices and the global slowdown emanating from Asia leading to a contraction in both May and June. Weak growth plus high debt servicing costs threatened the authorities with a potentially calamitous explosion in external debt, while the austere monetary and fiscal measures required to underpin the route simply added to rumbling social unrest, thereby making long-term economic reforms even more difficult.

Faced with the choice between the domestic economy and defending the currency, the Yeltsin government chose the former, as did John Major on Black Wednesday. This was sensible, even though there are those who say that the hard-earned gains in the battle to bring down inflation have been handed over to the disinflationary forces at play, both in the Russian and the global economy, this looks as dubious a proposition as it was in Britain in September 1992. The speculators say that Russia is heading up a blind alley and may be cutting itself off from foreign investment.

But what investment? According to the OECD, investment is running at 25 per cent of its 1990 level and the average age of plant and machinery is more than 14 years, compared to 9.5 years in 1980. Indeed, Moscow would be well advised to treat the advice of foreign investors with caution. Altruism is not readily associated with speculators and they seem a bit baffled that the Russian authorities have worried of being taken for a ride.

As one analyst put it last week: "The measures announced last Monday have effectively robbed the speculators of the air they need to breathe. The Russian government has clearly distinguished the needs of the real economy from that of the paper economy. It has exercised its right as a sovereign

power to make the rules of the game."

If this is so, it may prove to be a decisive moment. The Russians seem to have stumbled upon a basic premise of the Bretton Woods system — namely that if you have a pegged exchange rate and total capital mobility, you have effectively ceded control of your economy to the speculators abroad and the mafia bosses at home.

One way out of the crisis would be a currency board, under which a country effectively stops having its own autonomous monetary policy and instead adopts that of another nation. To the extent that it would make economic policy more transparent, a currency board would help to rebuild the power and integrity of the state.

But Russia's real need is not a stable currency, but a growing economy. Given its vulnerability to commodity prices, it would be better off with a fixed but adjustable exchange rate coupled with controls on capital, perhaps along the lines of those in Chile, where long-term direct investment is welcomed, but short-term flows are penalised. This runs the risk of making the current epidemic of corruption even worse, but this is not a situation in which there are cost-free options.

There will be those who say that there is nothing wrong with Russia that more free trade, greater capital mobility and even more financial orthodoxy could not put right. Russia, the orthodoxy goes, has to seize the moment, even if the objective conditions for a market revolution are not absolutely in place.

In the meantime, during the transition period there will be a dictatorship of the bond dealers. This approach has been tried once in Russia, with well-documented results. It is in the West's own interests to cut Russia some slack, to recognise that Moscow needs time to muddle through for a bit. For as traders in dealing rooms on Friday afternoon could testify, the Russian market still threatens the West, even if the Red Army does not.



Was Clarke a monetary revolutionary?

Debate

Robert Barrie

IF IT takes between one and two years for monetary policy to have its full impact on the economy, the numbers we are seeing now reflect interest rates in the last year of the last government. It is effectively the last time interest rates were set by the Bank of England's monetary policy committee.

It is widely argued now that selected specialists are likely to make a better job of monetary policy than elected politicians, and one of the first things the present Chancellor did after raising rates himself

for the first and last time was to hand rates over to the experts. The MPC duly raised them by a further 1 per cent point over the next six months.

The presumption seems to have been that Clarke left policy too loose before the election. At the time there were concerns about a new consumer boom — inflation forecasts were being revised upwards and it was all starting to look familiar.

But there were also signs that it might be different. Clarke raised rates six months before the election and followed that with a budget which tightened fiscal policy in the following three years. It is true that he resisted the Bank of England's advice to raise rates again before the election, but

that difference was over how to take the strength of sterling into account.

But we can now start to assess the policy of the central bank by looking at the outcomes — the latest growth and inflation numbers. On that basis, it does not look too bad. The consumer boom turned out to be halfhearted: cash spending growth has hardly picked up since the election. More generally, the numbers suggest non-oil growth has slowed to sub-trend again, and did not average more than 3 per cent last year.

Meanwhile, initial estimates suggest growth numbers could be revised down by up to 0.5 percentage points a year in each of the last three years when the national accounts are reformulated next month. The economy has

been working somewhat less hard than we thought.

Rather than rising, inflation has fallen. The gross domestic product index is running at 1.5 per cent on 2.5 per cent a year ago. More important, apart from the three months in which it was affected by the higher excise duties in the overlapping budgets of July and August, the retail price index (RPIX) inflation, excluding mortgages, has been at the 2.5 per cent target or within 0.1 percentage points of it throughout this year. RPIX inflation, which excludes indirect taxes, has been just over 2 per cent over the past year, against 2.5 per cent.

That is not to say the MPC was not right to raise rates, nor that there is nothing for it

to be concerned about now. Growth has slowed, but domestic demand still needs to do so. Inflation has fallen, but remains above the central bank's target.

Having said that, the single most important influence on the economy in recent years has been the strength of sterling — out of the hands and to some extent against the wishes of politicians and experts alike. Clarke's contribution was to see more clearly than most, perhaps, how significant that could eventually turn out to be.

Robert Barrie is UK economist for *Credit Suisse First Boston*

Tourist rates - bank sells

Australia 2.70	Germany 2.8488	Malaysia 8.82	Singapore 2.81
Austria 13.99	Greece 478.38	Mexico 16.52	South Africa 10.13
Belgium 66.74	Hong Kong 12.28	Netherlands 3.20	Spain 16.58
Canada 2.42	India 70.53	New Zealand 3.19	Sweden 12.97
Cyprus 0.835	Ireland 1.1279	Norway 12.28	Switzerland 2.38
Denmark 10.90	Israel 5.99	Portugal 200.23	Turkey 432.420
Finland 6.74	Italy 2.823	Saudi Arabia 6.01	USA 1.5980
France 6.52			

Supplied by NatWest (excluding rupee, shilling and Maldivian)

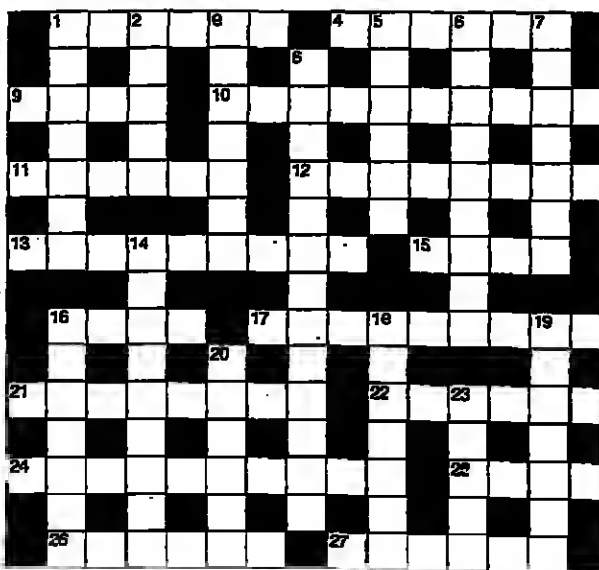
Indicators

TOMORROW — US: Existing home sales (July).	THURSDAY — UK: CBI monthly trends enquiry (August).
WEDNESDAY — UK: Whole world trade in goods (June).	FRIDAY — JP: Unemployment rate (July).
UK: Non-EU Trade in goods (July).	US: Harmonised CPI (July).
UK: Harmonised Index of consumer prices (July).	FR: Unemployment rate (July).

Source: HSBC Economics & Investment Services

Guardian Crossword No 21,361

Set by Rufus



Across

- Difficult in two ways (6)
- Reluctant to give the go-ahead for retreat (4)
- An air of faith? (4)
- Pictures on the wall, perhaps, of striptease (10)
- Girl graduate with whom I study (6)
- Brides eventually have tales to tell (3,5)
- Trace idea that is wrong and root it out (9)
- They may be put on but don't go off (4)
- Failed to make contact, say, in poor visibility (4)
- Protection money? (9)
- Dutch barman's liqueur (8)
- Athletes may take it in their stride (6)

Down

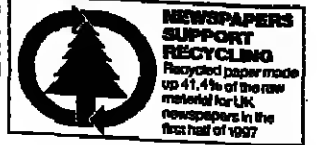
- The month's weather forecast for the London area (7)
- Having eaten a meal I'd end a different shape (6)
- Cast in a devilish mould (7)
- Soldier with interest in wanting to live (8)
- Distribute circular about university courses (9)
- Stickers for the traditional method of roasting (7)
- Points out ripe possibilities of advancement (13)

14 Finding out about Scott's ship (6)

- A little Latin is required for this (7)
- Remove all traces (7)
- Being hardened, a summons is nothing to us (7)
- Brave uncle? (6)
- Place to be played by boy at party (5)

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Partnoy's complaint opens Pandora's box

Worm's eye

Dan Atkinson

BOOK-JACKET endorsements of the *Wall Street Journal* makes Partnoy's previous best-seller on same topic read like a vicarious tale party. Variety are usually a sure sign that here is one production upon which discerning readers ought not to bestow their disposable income.

Usually, but not always. Last year, a former Wall Streeter, Frank Partnoy, published a little number his publisher declared lifted the lid on the entire

business of financial derivatives. But let's face it, this is hardly virgin territory, especially since the main agent, Nick Leeson, has already penned his memoirs.

Nevertheless, Partnoy's complaint was, in essence, new and interesting. It makes the case for the *buying* of exotic derivatives by rogue traders, he concentrated on the *selling* of exotic derivatives by rogue salesmen.

Needless to say, the knives were not for our Frank not long after he hit the bookshops. He was a disappointed man, murmured the Wall Street City spin-drier. He had craved recognition and respect on the trading floor in vain.

Anyway, he wasn't even a particularly stylish writer. Now Frank is out in paperback — so can we try again, please, to get some serious answers to Partnoy's allegations?

Here are three of the heaviest. Firstly, Partnoy alleges that the big buyers of futures, options and other high-risk derivatives are not George Soros and other speculation sophisticates but insurance and pension funds — not to mention the municipal governments, who ought properly to go nowhere near the things.

Furthermore, he alleges these dangerous financial instruments are deliberately repackaged by the big

banks, both to make them appear to be safe and to enable them to clear regulatory hurdles.

Secondly, he suggests that the recent practice whereby credit-rating agencies charge not only the party seeking information but also the borrower and its paper, but the bank or issuer as well, has compromised the entire business and made it easier for risky paper to secure a good low-risk rating.

Thirdly, Partnoy accuses western financiers of deliberately helping rocky Japanese banks — during the run-up to the Asian economic meltdown — to inflate their profits using derivatives, and to evade the

scrutiny of accountants and regulators.

More ominous still, hanging like a storm cloud over all these allegations, is the sense that no one is in charge of the rattling, runaway derivatives train.

In a chilling postscript, a hedge-fund adviser decides Partnoy's suggestion that a bank for which he worked was a big player on the derivatives market.

It wasn't a player, says hedge-fund, it was "just another sucker".

With markets sliding all around the world, this time around we need some grown-up answers and urgently. *Frank Partnoy: Profile*, £7.99.

Economics made easy

Charlotte Denny

What is the National Insurance Fund? It is the government account administered by the Department of Social Security. It takes in NI contributions and pays out benefits. But it is not a proper fund — contributions are invested and payments come from interest streams, rather than from the capital. Basically it is an accounting device for channelling NI receipts into benefit payments.

What are contributory benefits? Payments like the state pension, which require recipients to have

a record of NI contributions in order to qualify. When the welfare state was set up half a century ago most benefits were based on establishing contributions records.

Welfare state founder William Beveridge envisaged a nationalised form of insurance against risks like unemployment or illness — hence the name — with contributions replacing premiums. The insurance principle has been undermined by means-testing, so now a minority of benefits are based on contributions records — the state pension being the most important.

What happens to people's contributions? They go towards paying benefits for the current generation and those claiming unemployment or sickness benefits. NI contributions are really just a form of tax.

Why do people talk about the fund being in surplus? In the early days, the NI Fund required regular top-ups from other tax revenues to meet the demand for benefit payments. The Thatcher government abolished those during the 1980s. It was able to do so because it had cut back on

contributory benefits and linked pension rises to inflation rather than wage increases. This made the fund cheaper to run. Prices rise more slowly than wages, so the value of the pension was eroded. Rising unemployment in the early 1990s forced a reinstatement of the Treasury top-up. In some years — as last year — the fund does not need all the extra tax revenue.

That is when people talk about it running a surplus. But it is a misleading expression — it suggests the fund is making a profit. But all that is happening is that the fund is taking less money from current taxpayers.

كتاب الاقتصاد

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Ultimate Test
Sri Lanka's captain
on what it means
to beat England
18



Triple strike
Happy ending
puts Britain at the
head of Europe
24



Other pages
Football 14-18
Cricket 19-20
Rugby League 21
Tennis 21
Racing 22
Sport on TV 23

The Guardian Sport

Monday August 24 1998 www.football.guardian.co.uk

Smoke clears after battle of Yorke's drift

Premiership: Aston Villa 3 Middlesbrough 1

Villa's fire reduces the alarm bells to silence

David Lacey sees John Gregory's side buy valuable time after the big sell-off

FOUR fire engines turned up at Villa Park yesterday, presumably on the assumption that the £12.6 million Manchester United paid for Dwight Yorke would be burning a hole in Aston Villa's pocket. In the event Villa beat Middlesbrough with sufficient ease to avoid a panic-stricken rush into the transfer market, for at least a week anyway.

At the end 20,000 Yorke fans were distributed among the fans. Well, it has seemed a good idea at the time, and Villa supporters might not have been too keen on scoffing free Crunchies on behalf of Stan Collymore.

The departure of Yorke, and Collymore's ankle injury, emasculated Villa's attacking options to a point where Ricardo Sampaio, a central defender with reserve experience as a striker, played up front alongside little Julian Joachim. Makeshift though this was, it saw Joachim give Villa an early lead and almost complete command for an hour.

So who needs Yorke, and why surrender his fee on overpriced and probably less accomplished replacements? On this prima facie evidence it is a beguiling argument.

Then again Villa are unlikely to encounter many opponents who bring on proper strikers only when they are two goals down. Middlesbrough's supine approach saw Paul Merson cast in a lone attacking role while a five-man midfield attempted to stifle Villa's movements.

But far from doing so, the space that Andy Townsend, Robbie Mustoe and the one-paced Paul Gascoigne allowed their opponents enabled Lee Hendrie, Ian Taylor and Alan Thompson to dominate. Add the freedom Gary Charles was given on the right wing and it was a wonder the afternoon ever became a contest.

That it did was due to a belated recognition by Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, of the importance of goals. Once he replaced Gascoigne and Alan Moore with Mikkel Beck and Hamilton Ricard, Villa were forced to defend in areas where previously they had merely been out for an afternoon stroll.

A goal from Beck and suddenly

Match stats	
Possession	52% 48%
Attempts on target	5 8
Attempts off target	4 4
Corners	5 8
Fouls	10 13
Offsides	5 3
Bookings	1 1
Sendings-off	0 0

denly Villa were faced with something more than a rotten Boro. Thompson's late free-kick ended Middlesbrough's recovery but Robson's team had done enough to suggest a more positive approach away from Tyneside might bring greater rewards.

True, Middlesbrough were without Gary Pallister, Marco Branca and the newly signed Colin Cooper, but surrendering the initiative to a Villa side similarly weakened by injuries and departures was merely inviting defeat. If Boro are going to wear Argentina's strip on their travels they might as well try to acquire some Argentinian beef.

Gascoigne was part of the problem, not for anything he did — his passing and willingness to tuck back were admirable — but for the things he obviously was incapable of doing. Most of these involved a lack of pace and the need to preserve a diminished stamina.

All the while Gascoigne operated in a holding position in his own half he could not get

forward to link up with Merson. On the few occasions that he did, something always happened to disturb the reverie of Villa's defenders, such as the finely angled pass which Merson drove wide at the end of the first half.

Robson may continue to regard Gascoigne as a valuable tallisman, worth playing for those moments of skill he can still provide. But more questions will be posed about Gascoigne's reluctance to operate at much above the tempo of a testimonial match.

The manner in which Villa scored their first two goals, hitting swiftly and incisively on the break, rather made a nonsense of Middlesbrough's defensive outlook. Villa took the lead in the sixth minute after smart work in their own half by Gareth Barry to release Alan Wright on the left. Hendrie met Wright's cross with a sharp turn and lay-off, and Joachim's well-struck shot beat Mark Schwarzer.

After 52 minutes Villa began a move virtually from their own byline which eventually found Taylor's head glancing the ball out to Charles, who swung in past Dean Gordon before curling a left-footed shot into the far corner.

Villa should have all but put the match beyond Middlesbrough's reach before then. In the 38th minute Gianluca Festa wrestled Joachim to the ground to concede a penalty and Thompson prepared to score his first goal for Villa since arriving from Bolton for £4.5 million.

Thompson has one of the best left-foot shots in the English game but this time he went for accuracy rather than power and Schwarzer made an excellent diving save. Beck's goal, a sharp header from Merson's short cross within two minutes of coming on, sent a ripple of anxiety across Villa Park but with just under 15 minutes remaining Thompson's free-kick, struck with full force this time, took a deflection off Ricard, and that was that.



Luck bounces Villa's way... Julian Joachim evades a challenge from Middlesbrough's Gianluca Festa yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: STUART FRANKLIN

His boots were made for walking

Vivek Chaudhary finds the home faithful angry at destination rather than departure

BEFORE yesterday Aston Villa fans had their own tribute song to the man who once wore the claret-and-blue No. 10 shirt.

To the tune of Frank Sinatra's "New York, New York" they would chant: "Start spreading the news, He's playing today, I wanna see him score again, Dwight Yorke, Dwight Yorke."

Perhaps it was a prophetic choice of song, given Sinatra's original opening line: "Start spreading the news, I'm leaving today". Prior to the match the Villa Park Tannoy system broadcast an interview with

the manager John Gregory, who said he had sold Yorke because the player's heart was not in the club. It was a view shared by many outside Villa Park yesterday, who appeared more resentful of the fact that he had gone to Manchester United than the fact that he had actually left.

"He had gone to any other club, apart from Birmingham that is, then it wouldn't have been so bad," said Nathan Sawyers, aged 16. "Everybody hates Manchester United. Yorke had been with us for nine years and he should have stuck with us. We're capable of winning things as well."

People here would have killed for Dwight Yorke, we loved him a lot." Though never a prolific goalscorer, Yorke had embedded himself in the hearts of the Villa faithful, not surprising given that they have had to put up with the spitting Savo Milosevic, an uncertain David Unsworth and the tempestuous Stan Collymore who has promised much but has so far delivered little.

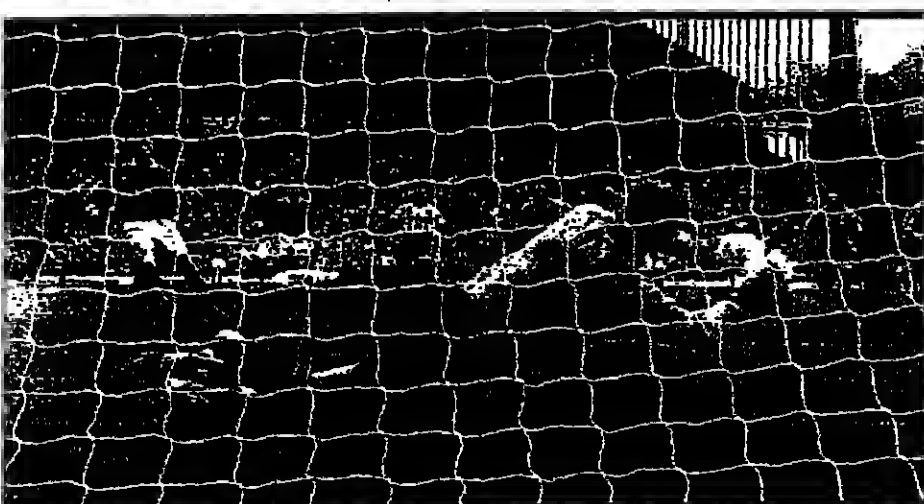
In Yorke's pearl-white dazzling smile they had a player they could rely on. He played and entertained with refreshing joy and energy, and given a choice between the delightful Dwight and the stroppy Stan it is not difficult to see why the fans thought of Yorke as one of their own.

"He did give his all to the club whenever he played," said Peter Edwards. "We thought of him as a Brummie, as one of our own. He was very good with the fans and the club did make a big effort to try and hold on to him. I don't think selling him reflects a lack of ambition on Villa's part, because if a player really wants to go then you can't stop him, it's impossible."

A poll in a local newspaper prior to Yorke's departure found that 80 per cent of Aston Villa fans agreed with selling him. For a forward who scored 13 Premiership goals last season, a transfer fee of £12.6 million made good economic sense and even the most loyal fan could see this.

As the teams ran out for yesterday's game, most of the fans vented their anger on Manchester United rather than the club chairman. "Stand up if you hate Man U," they chanted. As is the way with recently departed footballers, Yorke and his new team will receive a hostile reception when they visit Villa Park in December, whatever the forward once meant to the club and the fans.

One thing you will not hear at the match from three sides of the ground at least is the second verse to the song the Villa fans once sang for Yorke, which went: "If he can score from here, He'll score from anywhere. It's up to you, Dwight Yorke, Dwight Yorke."



Brief Boro reprieve... Mark Schwarzer saves Alan Thompson's penalty

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A sideways glance at soccer



Their kit don't fit
No. 42 Glenn Hoddle

Gazza Trashed My Room may be his best effort yet, but it's hardly the first time Glenn has made headlines. Who could forget that Eighties Tottenham classic, Steve Archibald stole my shorts?



The Team Shirt Revenue-Raising XI
Those big-name signings in full

Glenn Hoddle Replaces all too cut Gorrat at Spurs
Ronaldo Brought joy to Spurs' marketing arm
David Beckham Everton no longer short at the back
Fabrizio Ravanelli Worth almost double York's in lefties
Glenn Hoddle Rangers' long-winded pretty boy
Glenn Hoddle Almost makes up for Van Hoogstraten
Glenn Hoddle Keeping out minimalist Zola and Flo
Glenn Hoddle Welcome syllable boost at Charlton
Glenn Hoddle Apostrophe cheap at half the price
Glenn Hoddle Cole and Giggs too brief by half

A life in pictures

Gordon Strachan



1984-89 Player with Manchester United. Upright, aggressive, tense
1990-92 Player with Scotland. Aggressive, tense, upright
1993-95 Player with Leeds, Leeds, Leeds. Upright, aggressive, tense
1997- Manager of Coventry. Relaxed, jovial, laidback

Ask the experts

WHY were there no shoot-outs in the World Cup? Quite a few replays in the early days when time permitted, but there were also a lot of homecomings and more goals. Since 1970 the gap between top sides, both club and country, has progressively narrowed. Also, the very existence of the penalty shoot-out encourages negative play towards the end of the match by a weaker side. As much as England were lauded for their defensive performance against Argentina this summer, the truth is that as soon as Beckham went off England were hanging on for penalties. Martin Bell, London E17

State of the nation

Poland

Population 38 million
Residence club 4,000
Unlikely champions Pogoń, Łwów won four league titles in the 1920s, but will not win any more — Łwów is now in Ukraine.
Pioneer Poland's second most famous player, Zdzisław Jankowski (below), who was killed in a car crash in 1985, was signed by Manchester City for £100,000 worth of photocopies, medical equipment and hard currency in 1978. He played only 38 games before leaving for San Diego Sockers, remarking: "I don't need Malcolm Allison to tell me I am a great player."
Stranger in a strange land Dariusz Dąbrowski, the brilliant striker who thrived and flourished in equal measure at Celtic and Bristol City is chiefly remembered for his wild social life. "He couldn't adapt to anything in Britain, to the luxury of life, the money, everything," said one City employee.
Manc Busk (1) Deyna was not Manchester's only Polish connection. This week United play Leeds (pronounced "Woodies") in the Champions League qualifier. City went down on away goals to Leeds's city rivals White in the UEFA Cup in 1977, as did United in 1980.
Manc Busk (2) City were the opponents on the only occasion a Polish side has reached a European final, beating Cornik Zabze 2-1 in the 1970 Cup Winners' Cup final.

Off the park life



Another off-duty footballer who can't keep away from sport. This was that nice Gary Lineker's first appearance at Lord's for MCC in 1992. Who was it against, and how many did he score? Post, fax or e-mail your answer to the address below to win your choice of this month's new kit from the Football Book Club (0171-561 1606 for a catalogue). Last week's answer: Clive Allen, at Stamford Bridge. Winner: Martin Gough of Liverpool.

Clogger welcomes contributions. Write to the Guardian, 115 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. You can e-mail us at clogger@guardian.co.uk or fax us on 0171-713 4107

Football

Premiership: Tottenham Hotspur 0 Sheffield Wednesday 3

Domestic product failure sees Gross ripe for export

Russell Thomas sees Wednesday win and fans call for heads at still pointless Spurs

THE timeless equation of home defeat plus adverse crowd reaction equalling the sack threatens to cast Christian Gross out of Tottenham. If he defies this formula — and the bookmakers' ominous 4-7 latest odds that he will become the season's first Premiership managerial casualty — then this Swiss will be made of even sterner stuff than his soubriquet suggests.

For all his faults as selector and tactician, the embattled, black-clad head coach at least retained his dignity and cool-headedness amid the raucous atmosphere enveloping White Hart Lane, even as he gave a second press conference, his voice competing with the chants of about 350 demonstrators ringing out across the car-park.

player's questionable desire to tear up a lucrative long-term Old Trafford contract.

So it may need Sugar's most persuasive and determined negotiating when Tottenham talk to the player, a meeting which may be delayed until late this week because of United's trip to Poland. But given so many glaring weaknesses in Tottenham's team, even the signing of Solskjaer is unlikely to appease the angry supporters.

Gross played down the significance of Sugar's visit to the dressing-room at half-time, when this game was already up for Spurs. It was not the first time the chairman had slipped into that so-called sanctuary and, said Gross, "he didn't talk to the players".

"work hard and analyse, especially why we conceded again after two set pieces". This means another nasty video for the players after last week's Wimbledon screening.

His repeated faith in "the quality of my players" may be simply a stock tonic for the troops but the application of many is being loudly questioned by fans. Chris Armstrong, who may soon leave, and Les Ferdinand could complain of poor service but were also brushed aside physically.

In an unimpressive midfield, save for David Ginola's eye-catching but often self-indulgent thrusts, Darren Anderson was virtually non-existent. He was eclipsed by another tall, slim World Cup performer, Wim Jonk, an assured and precise orchestrator for Wednesday.

Tottenham's much-abused defence was reduced to two recognisable figures, Sol Campbell and Stephen Carr, by the end because of knocks



Gross... keeping his dignity

to Ramon Vega, who was spared further baiting in the second half by a footligament injury which, said Gross, "could be a bad one". The Italian left-back Paolo Tramezzani injured his knee and a finger. The defence was hardly helped by Ian Walker's error for the first goal as he appeared to throw the wrong ball at Peter Atherton's looping header. The third, direct from Andy Hinchcliffe's 25-yard free-kick, also raised questions about the goalkeeper as well as the wall. In between, Benito Carbone's ingenious chip and Paolo Di Canio's eventual finish effectively signalled the end of the contest. Only 35 minutes had elapsed.

West Ham United 0 Manchester United 0

Puzzling house of Yorke

David Lacey



BAD football matches just happen. Sometimes, however rich the ingredients, the occasion simply falls flat. It is not pre-planned or pre-arranged that way.

Nevertheless, this tedious, scoreless spectacle at Upton Park, where West Ham and Manchester United produced one of the poorest encounters between these sides in living memory, did offer a pertinent comment on the biggest issue now facing the game.

It was not the angst of David Beckham as he stepped out on to an opposing ground for the first time since his red card in the World Cup reduced England to 10 men against Argentina and belatedly their departure from the tournament. Upton Park



Hammer bold... the £12.6 million debutant Dwight Yorke is shackled by West Ham's Ian Pearce. PHOTOGRAPH: GARY M PIRRI

Match stats

	WHAM	MUN
Possession	48%	52%
Attempts on target	3	3
Attempts off target	3	6
Corners	3	11
Fouls	15	17
Offsides	3	4
Bookings	3	1
Sendings-off	0	0

boomed him ritualistically for a while but gave it up as universal boredom set in.

No, the underlying message of this match concerned the likely fate of the Premiership should Manchester United, along with Arsenal and Liverpool, decide to throw in their lot with a breakaway European League which would reduce the national competition to regional showdowns.

This week Uefa is due to hold meetings aimed at producing a compromise which will, it is hoped, avert a confederacy. The rebels will probably be offered a bigger Champions League which will meet most of their demands, although the removal of the need to win a championship or even finish runners-up to qualify would inevitably reduce the status of the Premiership and its equivalent in western Europe.

The way United plotted through Saturday's game was an alarming portent for what may lie ahead once a European League has been set up in two years. Take away the prime incentive for winning a domestic league and this is what you could get.

On Wednesday, United will defend a 2-0 lead in Leeds as they try to save themselves of a place in the Champions

League with its generous financial guarantees. And although this return game may not have weighed too heavily on the minds of Alex Ferguson's players at Upton Park, it was all too easy to imagine such a neutral performance becoming a regular occurrence as United prepared to face, say, Juventus or Barcelona in midweek.

That, at least, was the effect of United's football on Saturday. Obviously they set out to achieve more and might well have done so had a blatant handball by Neil Ruddock, making his first home appearance for West Ham since joining from Liverpool, been spotted in the third minute.

Ruddock, beaten by Ryan Giggs's cross with Andy Cole coming in to meet it, palmed the ball behind for a corner when the situation demanded a penalty. But the referee

Peter Jones could not give what he plainly had not seen. Ruddock turned out to be one of the two best players, the other being one of United's centre-backs, Henning Berg, who replaced the injured Jaap Stam.

In signing Ruddock, West Ham paid approximately one-tenth of the £10.75 million that Stam cost and Ruddock proceeded to query further the £12.6 million United have laid out for Dwight Yorke.

Not that Yorke was much to blame, since he began his new career in a largely unsuitable role. In his nine years with Aston Villa he evolved from a scoring winger with pace and a natural left foot into an all-round creative talent who still found the net regularly. If he is to thrive he must surely remain a free spirit. At Upton Park he was played up alongside Cole and piled with the

sort of high balls which Ruddock could clear in his sleep and without using his hands. Rarely did he receive passes to his feet.

It would be wrong to judge Yorke on one appearance, but the fact that Paul Scholes was left out to make way for him may have puzzled United supporters all the same. Ferguson has a strong enough squad to shuffle the team around and there is still Jasper Blomqvist, the 24.4 million signing from Parma, to be considered once the Swedish winger is fit. Yet the omission of Scholes and the way Yorke was employed meant there was often an empty space behind the front runners unless Giggs or Beckham moved into the middle.

Roy Keane and Nicky Butt were impeccable and Butt's marshalling of Eyal Berkovic, the theatrical fulcrum of West

Ham's attack, was one of the few items of note in an unmemorable game but Ferguson's team seldom developed the momentum which might have brought them their first league victory.

This is not to say that United were entirely responsible for a contest that seldom rose above the lukewarm. West Ham, with their wing-backs Andrew Impey and Stan Lazaridis restricted by the need to watch Giggs and Beckham, and with John Harrison looking ring-rusty, never really got going.

Ruddock's early luck and all-round excellence, plus Shaka Hislop's sharp save to deny Cole shortly before half-time, preserved for Harry Redknapp's team the point for which they were probably the more grateful. The crowd were merely grateful for the final whistle.

Leicester City 2 Everton 0

Everton take their defeat sitting down

Adam Sills

SIT down if you're going down. The goading cries have started already: the Everton fans have little reason to get out of their seats, and who is to say there will not be tears before bedtime in one part of Merseyside come the season's end on May 17?

A section of Leicester fans refused to obey safety warnings to sit down. In conjunction with their mocking chants it was apt. The vibrant

home support relished Saturday's win, which confirmed the club's European credentials and the solid principles of even more solid defence.

Ball-playing centre-halves have for a while been in vogue but, with a back line of Matt Elliott, Steve Walsh and Leicester's £2 million club-record signing Frank Sinclair, "get it away" is a far more effective command than "play away".

The Leicester manager Martin O'Neill was certainly impressed: "We were really fantastic and we played football

as good as we've done in the Premiership." A delightful job from the evergreen Tony Cottee and a tap-in from Muzzy Izzet were just reward for a first-half performance which bristled with inventiveness, bite and organisation.

Rumours surrounding the future of the striker Emile Heskey have abounded, though, and Leicester are reported to have turned down a £9 million offer from Aston Villa. Heskey was diplomatic: "I've got one year left on my contract and we're holding talks at the moment. I'm

happy to stay but we'll see how it goes.

He is not the finished article but, having been encouraged by O'Neill to turn and run at defenders, he will strike fear into the heart of defences everywhere. "He's frightening," Cottee confirmed. "People forget that he is only 20 years old and he won't peak for six or seven years."

Cottee's and Heskey's cause was helped by an Everton defence which may prove their downfall this year. But where there is a satisfied wife there

is hope, and with the introduction of David Unsworth in the second half the visitors' back line at least had a focal point.

The new manager Walter Smith spoke afterwards of "working out where the deficiencies are". Long-suffering fans might say "everywhere" despite the summer outlay of £13.5 million. Smith's impressive tenure at Rangers, where he won 12 trophies in six years, was blotted only by his grim record in Europe. This is unlikely to be a concern at Goodison.

كلاصا لاجل

The Guardian Monday August 24 1998

Europe

[illegible]

Freiburg	1	Bayern Munich	1
Bayern Munich	3	MSV Duisburg	1

[illegible]

Montpellier	5	Montpellier	4
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[illegible]

William P. T. 1 0 0 1 0 2 0

MAC Brades	2	Ulrichs	1
NAC	2	Witte de With	0
Nesje Arnhem	1	Roda JC Kerkrade	0
NV Meusbroek	1	FC Doornik	0
Nieuwoud	1	PSV Eindhoven	1
SC Alkmaar	3	Sparta Rotterdam	0
SC Meusbroek	2	NEC Brades	1

FLAMING SUPERCLUBS Second leg
 Flamming Superclubs
 Barcelona 0 Mallorca 1 (agg. 0-3).

FLORIAN LEAGUE Herfølke
 Herfølke 0, Sønderjyske Esbjerg 0
 Sønderjyske 3, Lyngby 2
 Lyngby 1, Aalborg 1
 Aalborg 1, Charlton 1
 Charlton 3, Gent 0
 Gent 2, Esbjerg 1
 Esbjerg 2, Lyngby 2
 Lyngby 2, Sønderjyske 2
 Sønderjyske 1, Sønderjyske 0
 Sønderjyske 2, Sønderjyske 2

FLORIAN LEAGUE Sønderjyske
 Sønderjyske 2, Aalborg 2
 Aalborg 2, Sønderjyske 2
 Sønderjyske 2, Sønderjyske 2

	Games	Yell	Red	Ave
Other	1	0	0	0.00

	High	Low	Avg
Ala. Univ.	55,052	55,052	55,255
Ala. Wesleyan	44,438	34,529	44,425
Ala. State	38,112	61,115	47,463
Univ. of Tenn.	30,084	35,094	38,089
Univ. of Miss.	36,719	36,719	36,719
Univ. of Ark.	34,795	34,795	34,795

Politeness	34,182	34,182	34,182
Stimulation	32,129	32,129	32,129
Self-Wed	30,238	30,238	30,238

Third Division

ace two points behind Rotherham, who maintained their 10 per cent lead by beating Cambridge United 2-0 through second-half goals from Jason White and Lee Glover. Rotherham's keeper Mike Pollitt made his second penalty save of the season last before the end.

In Devon's high-noon showdown at Plainmoor, Torquay United rallied against Exeter and scored twice in the second half. Scott Partridge's strike got the season's first goal.

It's struggling with five minutes left, leaving Exeter a little time to recover and their manager Peter Fox very disappointed.

"We totally outplayed them," he said, "and to have 80 per cent of the play and to come away with nothing is

Arjuna Ranatunga leads Sri Lanka in the final Test of England's summer, starting at The Oval on Thursday. **David Hopps** meets the most influential cricketer on the world stage today

Power behind a genial image

IN terms of English cricket Alec Stewart's influence will have risen markedly since the Test series victory over South Africa. He will captain England in Australia this winter with largely the Ashes squad he wants and can be sure that his stock will remain considerable just as long as victories keep falling his way. But, when it comes to true power, Stewart is but a bit-part player in comparison with Arjuna Ranatunga. When Sri Lanka's captain leads out his team for their one-off Test at The Oval on Thursday, he does so as the most powerful cricketer in the world. Ranatunga does not immediately strike the casual English observer as a cricketing dictator. Perhaps it is all that disarming banter about his tubby appearance, or perhaps it is assumed that, in the island that gave the world "serendipity", control tends to fall to the deserving by good fortune rather than design. But investigate the extent of Ranatunga's authority in Colombo and the answers soon become apparent. How powerful? All powerful. How long will he survive? As long as he wants. How often does he get his way? Always. His legacy is regarded as considerable even by those outside his favoured circle. "Arjuna Ranatunga is to Sri Lanka what WG Grace was to English cricket a century ago," concluded one prominent Colombo businessman and former cricket official. "Like Grace did in England, he has wielded tremendous power over many years and during that time he has revolutionised the game. Who would ever have imagined that Sri Lanka would become World Cup winners?"

He is a leader, shrewd and uncompromising, brooks no nonsense and he is not always open to reason. Many people question how he was ever allowed to gain so much control. But, if you add up the

pluses and minuses, he still comes out as a plus. He has taken our cricket to a new plane.

While doing so, Ranatunga has lost a few friends along the way. Still wildly popular in the country at large, he has offended too many sensibilities in Colombo's politicking circles to receive unreserved acclaim. He is a strong-willed individual who will tenaciously oppose those who dare to question his views. "Who is this hooligan?" asked a former Sri Lankan chairman of selectors two decades ago on watching Ranatunga, an unknown teenager from the sticks, lofting the ball in the air at one of his first net sessions at the Sinhalese Sports Club. Some ask the same question rhetorically today.

Ranatunga is a street-fighter in the Javed Mianand class. Mark Taylor, the Australian captain, has described him as an "abrasive customer who deliberately gets up the opposition's nose" and he was not being particularly critical. It is what has made him indispensable. Sri Lanka's image as a genial, happy-go-lucky cricketing country, immensely polite and easily intimidated — the perfect losers, in fact — has become increasingly outdated under his charge.

"I was the first Sri Lankan to give the Australians some stick back," he reflects proudly. "Test cricket is as much a mind game as a technical game and, whether you talk back or keep quiet, you must maintain your concentration."

He comes from a family that has extensive political and cricketing influence. His father, Reggie, an MP in President Kumaratunga's Freedom Party, the majority party, is a deputy minister in Sri Lanka's coalition government. The Minister of Sport, SE Dissanayake, is a close ally of Reggie Ranatunga. Although the Sri Lankan cricket board nominates a

short-list of selectors, it is Dissanayake who makes the final choice. It would be a surprise if the Minister made that decision while unaware of Arjuna's preferences.

Although only Arjuna, of six brothers, has had a long-term Test career, four of them have played international cricket. Dhammika is chief executive of the cricket board. Prasanna is also a board member, by virtue of his presidency of the Gampaha District Cricket Association.

Only Prasanna, a provincial minister, has so far entered a political career but Arjuna would be a great asset for a coalition government possessing a one-seat majority. He is already receiving overtures to take up politics when he decides to retire from the Sri Lankan captaincy. And he will decide; no one else is about to make the decision for him.

POLITICS in Sri Lanka, as long as the Tamil Tigers continue their terrorist activities in search of an independent state in the north and east of the island, is no sinecure. Understandably Arjuna is undecided about his future. "I have a young son and daughter, and I've been neglecting them," he said. "We've only had two months off since winning the World Cup and after I retire I want to spend at least a year thinking about things. Politics is a dangerous business."

The family have known the perils. Twenty-one years ago a change of government led to the Ranatunga house in Gampaha, a pineapple-growing area an hour to the north-east of Colombo, being burned down in an act of political revenge.

"My father was the area political organiser," Arjuna recalled. "We had no insurance and we had to leave the area for fear that my father would be attacked. At that time I was captain of the

under-14 side at Ananda College. For six months the only cricket equipment I had was one shirt and one pair of trousers. A lot of people looked after me."

Family loyalties invariably run deep for Ranatunga. "Ours is a passive and respectful culture," he said. "Even now I never put my feet up when my mother and father are in the same room. I have an occasional drink but never in my father's company. We must respect our elders."

Street-fighter he might be but he seeks to adapt that culture to Sri Lankan cricket. He routinely refers to the manager, Ranjit Fernando, and coach, Roy Dias, as "Aiya", which translates from Sinhala as "elder brother", and expects team-mates to offer him the same deference.

There was a time about 10 years ago when one or two coaches suggested that we should stop this. I said that I expected it. I don't think that I will ever call the coach or manager by their name. When you hear that word, you know that you are respected and looked up to."

That emphasis on family means that Ranatunga is not always responsive to rival ideas from outside. When Dev Wharmore, the Sri Lankan-born Australian, coached them to World Cup victory three years ago, he was widely credited with the adoption of

the high-risk batting tactics in the opening overs that played such a huge part in their success. His introduction of modern training and dietary methods was also overdue. Wharmore, a gentle and responsive man, had little desire to play power politics. But, if Ranatunga

was content for Sanath Jayasuriya, the batting star of the World Cup, to share the nation's adulation, the prospect of what more becoming the dominant figure in Sri Lankan cricket was less attractive. Within months more had been replaced. This season he has rejuvenated Lancashire to such an extent that, as well as reaching the NatWest final, they are making a rare challenge for the championship. He is still embittered by the Sri Lankan experience.

This is likely to be Ranatunga's last Test in England — by the time Sri Lanka return for an overdue three-Test series



in 2003 the odds are he will be ennobled as coach — but he expects to return for next summer's World Cup. The slimming down of a portly frame by nearly two stones over the past year should help.

"There are three things I really love in life, my cricket, my kids and my food," said the batsman whose bat sponsorship currently espouses the attraction of Sam's Chicken and Ribs. "I'm also following a more strenuous training programme but I damaged a disc in my back six years ago, so there is a limit to what I can do."

"LIKE people talking about my weight and I like walking my singles in Test cricket. I wouldn't recommend it to young players but I reckon I've won more over-throwing in the past 10 years than any player in the world."

Nearly 17 years have passed since Ranatunga made his debut in Sri Lanka's inaugural Test against England at the now run-down Sarawana-mattu Stadium in Colombo. He made a half-century in the first innings, despite a twice-daily journey of two hours by train and bus to get to the ground. He travelled third-class and received a seat only because the railway staff, all cricket fans, looked after him. His parents had wanted

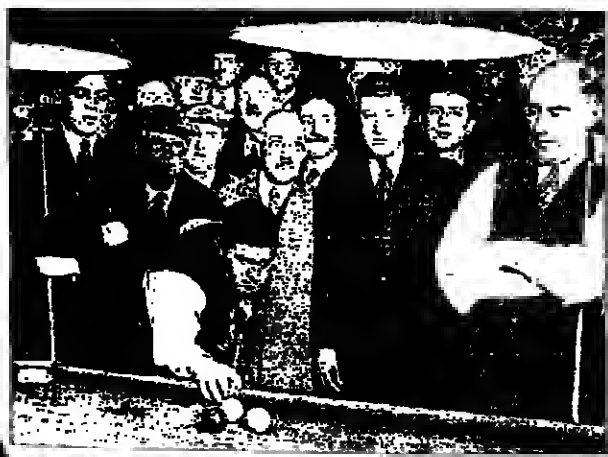
him to become a doctor. Ranatunga himself has imagined being a pilot; 81 Tests and nearly 5,000 runs later such ambitions have long been forgotten. But the memories of his trying early years continue to live with him.

He is a tireless champion of improving cricket in the rural areas and breaking a traditional reliance on the Colombo and Kandy colleges — a broadening of their cricketing base that has had much to do with their recent success.

"Players from the rural areas have had to survive with hardly any equipment or facilities," he says. "They have had to work hard for their success. They are greedy to succeed. It is all relative. All but the most cosseted college cricketers can face the prospect of an arduous bus journey home after net practice as much as five times a week."

One of Arjuna Ranatunga's delights at winning the World Cup was that President Kumaratunga guaranteed him land on which, with the help of private fund-raising, a hostel will be built for promising young cricketers visiting Colombo from the outlying areas. It will be far from his only legacy but it will be among those he holds most dear.

He has waited a long time for the chance to lead a Sri Lankan side at Lord's but he has achieved his wish. They will tell you in Colombo that he normally does.



Way back when
Clive Everton remembers Walter Lindrum, who was so good he was bad for billiards

Break man... Lindrum, born 100 years ago this week, keeps Willie Smith waiting in London, 1929. PHOTOGRAPH: HALTON GETTY

AUGUST 29, 1898, was a good day for Fred Lindrum II, the Australian billiards champion. He won a money match in the Shamrock Hotel, Kalgoolie, and his fourth child, Walter, was born. That babe was to conquer billiards as no player has ever conquered any other sport. Walter Lindrum and his nearest rivals, two Englishmen, Joe Davis and Tom Newman, and a New Zealander, Clark McConachy, reached such a standard, with such an inhuman elimination of error, that billiards was to become the only game ever to perish as a sustainable spectator sport because its leading

exponents became too good. Fred Lindrum was obsessed with the idea of having a world champion in the family. He knew he was not up to it himself and neither, despite a promising start, was his eldest son, Fred Lindrum III. It was soon apparent that Walter was. He was a natural right-hander but had to have his right index finger amputated in childhood when he caught it in a mangle. He became a left-hander and all his personal, educational and social development was sacrificed for billiards. Sometimes his father would lock him away in the billiard room of his hotel with only one ball so

that he would learn to strike it accurately. Sometimes he was given the red as well so that he became virtually infallible with in-offs and potting the red from his spot. The fragile competitive structure of those days took second place to matches arranged by promoters, usually lasting a week, sometimes a fortnight. When HW Stevenson, a former champion, came out from England in 1928, the young Lindrum hit him with a break of 1,417, every shot but the first either a pot or in-off red. Stevenson sniffed that this was "not billiards" but was politely referred to the scoreboard. Soon

afterwards, not just because of Lindrum, the rules were altered to allow only 25 consecutive pots and/or in-offs. In 1928 Willie Smith was playing a week's match against Newman in Manchester. He was joined for tea during the interval by two boxers of the day, Jimmy Wilde and Jim Driscoll, and a professional backer Leo Oppenheimer. Wilde asked him how he was getting on. "Not bad, I'm 2,250 unfinished." (He took it to 3,748 in the evening.) Oppenheimer immediately wrote out a cheque for £500 to back him against Lindrum. Smith put a match to it. "What are you doing?" "I'm saving

you money. I've got no chance." Smith, who could play the all-round game just about as well as it could be played, did not have nursery cannons (where the three balls were nursed delicately along a cushion and over past the pocket openings) in his repertoire. He said it would take him about four minutes to make a century whereas Lindrum, with his cannon game, could make one in less than two. "Why are you going then?" "For the money." Lindrum won the first game of the series, Smith the second, making a break of 1,028 in 67 minutes on the last day. A Sydney newspaper put



Key moments in Sri Lanka's coming of age

March 1982

Siddath Wettimuny, playing against Pakistan in Faisalabad, became Sri Lanka's first Test century in their third match. He also shared their first century stand (217) with the current coach Roy Dias. Somachandra De Silva (right) then became their first bowler to take five wickets in an innings (five for 59) as Pakistan, chasing 339, slithered to 137 for six but held out. It was the only time Sri Lanka avoided defeat in their eight Tests.

August 1984

At Lord's, Wettimuny was at it again, with 190 out of 481 for seven declared, both Sri Lanka records. England, already beaten 5-0 by West Indies that summer, had

to put up with him for well over 10 hours. Later Duleep Mendis became the first Sri Lanka skipper to reach three figures. Allan Lamb's 107 saved England. Still it was not a bad initiation for Aravinda de Silva on his debut.

September 1985

Sri Lanka prevailed in the second Test of the rubber against India at Colombo's P. Saravanamuttu Stadium, winning a Test at the 14th attempt (New Zealand did so at the 45th). The

series finished 1-1, a national best for a decade, and yet another dazzling de Silva. Arnel, became the first wicketkeeper to score a century and pocket nine victims in a Test. In Kandy a week later Mendis (left) became the first Sri Lanka to reach 1,000 Test runs as a draw secured the series.

July 1997

30,000 thronged the R Premadasa Stadium to see if Sarath Jayasuriya (far right), 326 not out against India, could overhaul Brian Lara's 375. He fell for 940 but Sri Lanka reached an unprecedented 952



Test record

	M	A	W	D	L
Australia	10	4	6	0	3
England	5	2	3	1	1
India	13	5	11	1	1
New Zealand	18	3	9	4	7
Pakistan	19	7	12	3	7
South Africa	5	3	2	0	2
West Indies	3	1	2	0	1
Zimbabwe	2	4	3	4	3
Total	86	38	48	13	37

for six, adding 578 with Roshan Maharoof to outstrip the previous highest Test stand by 108.

March 1998

Inspired by the off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan (left), who took seven wickets, they won the third Test against New Zealand in Colombo, becoming the fifth side to come from behind to win a three-match rubber and the first to do so twice.



up a 100-guinea silver tea service as a prize for the decider. Smith's cue snapped near the tip with his first shot. A betting ring had got at it. Asked at the age of 90 how long it took to get used to another Smith replied: "I never did." Worse befell Lindrum. His pregnant 20-year-old girlfriend Rosie was knocked down by a bus and was in hospital when the match started. She had set her heart on the tea service but developed pneumonia. Lindrum's early lead of 3,000 dwindled and Smith got in front as Lindrum, distracted, visited Rosie in hospital in all his spare moments.

She reminded him of the tea service: "Wally, you've got to make a 2,000 break for me." He carried his unfinished 185 to 2,002 and the next evening was 2,128 in front again when Rosie suffered a relapse. Lindrum summoned a minister and, with Rosie barely conscious and able to sign the certificate only with an X, they were married. A few hours later she died. The match was abandoned and Lindrum was presented with the tea service.

was playing in public, prone to depression and lethargy. Meanwhile Smith had signed him to a contract with Burroughes and Watts, the table-makers, to play in Britain. With the World Championship being played in the Leicester Square matchroom of their rivals Thurston, Smith and Lindrum toured the country and the public knew the real No.1 was being decided between them. Smith averaged 109 per visit to the table, which was usually good enough to win the World Championship. Lindrum averaged 282 and won 36,256-14,971.

Lindrum was so far in a class of his own that he co-coached Davis, Newman and McConachy a 7,000 start each in another contest the following year and still won first prize. In 1932 at Thurston's he played through most of an afternoon, all the evening and well into the next afternoon on a break of 4,137.

In 1933 Lindrum eventually played in the World Championship and won it but made it clear he would never return. Davis thus sailed to Australia in 1934 to challenge for the title, only to find that Lindrum had done nothing to promote the championship or any exhibition matches. Lindrum retained the title and it took Davis six months to earn enough to get home.

Bonding on the bus to bust the dams on the field

FAIR GAME

Julie Welch

SEASONAL Affective Disorder is the name given to a depression which strikes people only during the dark winter months. It is also the condition suffered by some football managers in August when the season is two weeks old and already going pear-shaped.

Generally it takes the form of having crackdowns or losing grip on reality or telling a reporter to go and write about the organs of reproduction after a mildly probing question at the post-match press conference. After Reading's 4-1 defeat by Bristol Rovers Tommy Burns has banned alcohol, junk food and the use of mobile phones when travelling as a team. Instead he has installed a microwave in the bus to cook pasta for them. This should work well until someone mistakes it for the video and flambés Terminator 2. Burns says he does not want players having private conversations on mobiles when they should be bonding.

Some newly promoted managers react to early-season crises by trying to sign more players, generally foreign ones. Budgets already on an economy setting after millions have been spent trying to win promotion will be further eroded by the opportunistic greed of agents who know desperation when they smell it. The manager will discover a footballer has to cost £8 million before anyone outside his immediate family has heard of him, £3.5 million before he is actually capable of crossing the ball and at least £1.5 million if required to be alive from the neck down.

Then there is all the stress of looking after the new arrival. This is compounded if the player, having been attracted by the prospect of King's Road cafes, cosmopolitan teammates and meals in swanky restaurants with members of the celebrity set, has insisted to his agent that he will consider only a London club. Sadly the agent lacks an up-to-date A to Z street plan and has sold him to Leyton Orient.

And while it is unsettling for a player to exchange life in a sunny climate for a place where he has to wear a wet suit to get from his car to the players entrance, it is not half as unsettling as for the manager when it turns out his signing is useless, psychopathic and terminally homesick, as well as having hideous features and hair like a rat's nest.

In fact, it is worth bearing in mind that clubs which try to be like the big boys, sign a bunch of foreigners and hire a nutritionist who will not let players eat anything but gnocchi and carrot juice tend to last one season in the top flight, while loony, throbber dinosaurs such as Wimbledon get tipped for relegation every year, refuse to buy anyone at all, exist on a diet of fried Mars bars and Paragut, and prosper.

A woman in hot pursuit going for a Burton record

CENTRE STAGE

William Fotheringham

THIS essence of the Italian cyclist can be summed up in a single image — that of a rider ascending a mountain alone, way ahead of the chasing pack. *Un uomo solo* was the sentence which immortalised Fausto Coppi in the 1960s and it was used again this summer as the little climber Marco Pantani won the Tour de France.

The image that best sums up the British cyclist is that of a solo cyclist on a velodrome, not riding a road race such as the Tour de France but engaged in the track pursuit. British cyclists have earned more medals in this slightly esoteric cycling discipline in the post-war years than in all the others put together. They include the only post-war Olympic gold won by Chris Boardman in the pursuit at Barcelona in 1992.

Boardman travels to Bordeaux this week in quest of a third pursuit gold medal in the World Track Championships. But even should he win in spite of his disastrous crash in this year's Tour de France, he will be well short of being the best British ever in the discipline. This honour is still held by the late Beryl Burton, who won the women's title five times between 1959 and 1966.

Just as Boardman has picked up the torch from Hugh Porter, four times champion between 1968 and 1973, Burton has her heirress in a fellow Yorkshirewoman Yvonne McGregor. After taking the title she went to Perth, in Australia, to take the bronze medal in last year's World Championship.

Compared to the Tour de France, the pursuit is a brief, repetitive, assault on the pain barrier. The principle is simple: two riders start on opposite sides of an oval velodrome — usually in a stadium — usually in a stadium for title defences came to nothing. When eventually there was a commercially credible challenge from McConachy in 1982, Lindrum relinquished the title. He was awarded the OBE and died in 1980.



Tyke of the track... Yvonne McGregor. PHOTOGRAPH: PHIL O'CONNOR

when the difference in ability or strength is particularly marked, and usually the two cyclists are simply timed for the set distance, and the faster wins. Aerodynamic bikes mean that McGregor will be in action for barely three and a half minutes in each round.

A qualifying round decides the fastest eight and then it is sudden death to the final. Compared to the infinite nuances of road racing, pursuit is barely tactical. It is principally a question of the cyclist calculating how much energy they can expend to keep their opponent within or just out of reach before the crescendo into exhaustion.

The physical effort is intense but not as obvious as, say, Pantani climbing L'Alpe d'Huez. So what intrigues is the psychological battle, the more so now the cyclists' faces are hidden by aero-dynamic helmets.

Coping with pain is not a problem for McGregor, who regularly broke bones in her early years — she managed to smash collarbone, shoulder and cheekbone in 1996 alone. A very sense of humour helped her cope with four major accidents in three years. Like Boardman, she has held the world distance record for one hour, the toughest feat, in terms of distilled agony that cycling has to offer outside the Tour.

The Boardman connection runs deep: since 1983 she has been part of the team which Boardman set up to bring on Olympic prospects, famously Boardman has helped repair her bike on occasions in the past, and she has shared the expertise of the sports scientist Peter Keen, who guided

the Wirral racer to his Barcelona gold. Their training plan for Atlanta's bumday included riding a stationary bike in the bathroom with the central heating on and the shower running.

McGregor has moved across the Pennines to be close to the Manchester velodrome but she is all Yorkshirewoman in her accent and her penchant for plain speaking. The Leeds-born Burton is her model; McGregor, from Bradford, was inspired to take up cycling when she took Burton's autobiography Personal Best out of the library after an Achilles tendon injury put paid to her running career.

She has taken several of Burton's British time-trial records but, whereas her fellow Yorkshirewoman remained a British-based cyclist throughout her career, making an annual sortie abroad to pick up her medals in the World Championships, McGregor has recognised the need to race on the world circuit in Europe to improve her strength and moved into the top five on the world road rankings earlier this year. The Leeds-born Burton is her vital ones for her and Keen, who for the last nine months has been performance director of British cycling, responsible for turning Lotteries money into medals. McGregor views this week in Bordeaux as a dry run for the Commonwealth Games, where she took gold in the track points race in 1996. Keen is well aware that the Games will be the first high-profile display of what he has achieved, and that McGregor is one of his few reliable hopes for a medal.

European Athletics Championships

Machado muscles in on Mota's record

Duncan Mackay in Budapest

JUST as Britain's sprinters have monopolised these European Championships, Iberia's runners have dominated the distance events. Manuela Machado was the latest to get in on the act when she extended Portugal's hegemony in the European Championships marathon here yesterday.

The first to congratulate the tiny Machado after she had crossed the line was Rosa Mota, whose 12-year-old championship record she had broken with her winning time of 2hr 27min 10sec.

It was Mota who started Portugal's remarkable run 16 years ago when she won the first European Championships women's marathon in Athens. She went on to retain her title in Stuttgart in 1986 and Split in 1990 and was succeeded by Machado in Helsinki four years ago.

This year's race turned into a wait by the River Danube for Machado. On a blustery morning she ran with the pack until the last seven miles when she joined Russia's Marina Biktagirova in what was to prove the decisive break.

As the sun began to shine and the temperature rose, Machado increased her pace, drawing away from Biktagirova a mile later and extending

her lead to 51 seconds over the cobbled streets.

She joined her team-mate Antonia Pinto, the 10,000 metres champion, on Portugal's roll of honour. Spain's men, meanwhile, have won the 1500m and 5000m here.

"The race was easy for me, very easy," Machado said. "I never doubted that I would win."

Among those competing in Athens in 1982, when Mota first imposed Portugal's iron grip on the marathon title, was the 16-year-old Heike Drechsler. The German has similarly dominated the long jump, extending her run of consecutive victories to four on Saturday.

Her winning leap of 7.16 metres beat Italy's former Briton Fiona May and showed that, after a year of injuries and personal problems, Drechsler is back.

The tears spilled on the medal podium were a reaction to the toughest period of the 33-year-old's life. Last autumn the former Olympic and world champion and world record holder feared her career was over after she had surgery on both Achilles tendons.

Added to this was an acrimonious divorce from her footballer husband which dominated the German tabloids. To complete her troubled year she was accused of being an agent for the former East German secret police, the Stasi.

This was maybe for me the hardest win," she said, "last year I thought that the time was right to retire but the operations went well and step by step I decided to carry on. It was very moving for me to stand on the podium."

Her victory meant she became only the third athlete to win four consecutive European titles in the same event, matching the performance of two former Soviets, Janis Lusis in the men's javelin (1962-1971) and Nadezhda Chizhova in the women's shot put (1966-74).

The most awesome performance of the evening came in the women's 4x100m final. France's individual champion Christine Arron took the baton on the anchor leg in third place, eight metres behind the 200m gold medalist Irina Privalova of Russia. With startling acceleration she overhauled Privalova, confirming her position as the woman of the championships.



Happy Heike... Drechsler on way to long jump gold



Mother love... Denise Lewis blows a kiss to her mother in the stand after taking the heptathlon gold, winning five of the seven disciplines

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL PROBST

The day when British athletics was reborn

Duncan Mackay sees two injured heroes return to their old winning ways in Budapest

WATCHING Denise Lewis and Colin Jackson's stunning wins in the heptathlon and the 110 metres hurdles at the European Championships in the Nép Stadium on Saturday, a comparison could be drawn with the rebirth of British athletics. Like the sport, both had been written off but both got it right when it mattered.

Lewis had been close to packing in her season after suffering an ankle injury which meant she spent more time in physiotherapy

clinics than on the track. But the world silver medalist showed tremendous character over two gruelling days here to total 6,559 points and beat Poland's Urszula Włodarczyk by 99 points for the first major title of her career.

Germany's Sabine Braun, the world champion who had been expected to be Lewis's closest rival, finished only sixth. Jackson was back to being the peerless Prince of Wales as he set a championship record of 13.02sec in his semi and then equalled

it in the final, beating Germany's Falk Balzer by a tenth of a second.

It earned the 31-year-old Brecon runner a place in the history books alongside his former business partner Linford Christie as the only Britons to win three consecutive titles in the same event. Victory was all the more satisfying after three years of injuries and problems which had seen him come close to quitting the sport.

"This performance has to be right up there with the best," Jackson said. "It was important I showed everyone I was still around."

God Save The Queen also rung out around the famous old stadium for Britain's 4x100m relay team of Allyn Condon, Darren Campbell, Dong Walker and Julian Golding. Amazingly, for all Britain's success in the sprints, this was the first time they had won this event in the championships' 64-year history. It also earned second gold medals for the 100 and 200m champions Campbell and Walker respectively.

Fittingly, Mary Peters was there to present the 26-year-old Lewis with her gold medal. The 1972 Olympic pentathlon champion has been Lewis's mentor for many years and was in floods of tears after she had presented the award. "Denise really showed her character by coming back from

her ankle injury to win," she said.

For Lewis herself there was a feeling of relief as much as elation at her success. "I was so fit in April but it all went wrong," she said. "What I thought was a slight niggle in my ankle turned out to be a massive problem."

"I had to revise all my plans and instead of training hard I had to see physiotherapists and specialists. At one stage I even scrapped my training to concentrate on rehab. I lost eight weeks."

"I wasn't the only heptathlete with problems this year, though. This competition was about the survival of the fittest. I was lacking speed and endurance on the

track. I knew I was not a 100 per cent fit but I didn't think I had to be; just solid and competitive."

"When this sinks in it will make me feel like I want to cry. I've had to show a lot of mental toughness. This week has been the silver, not the golden lining in what was a very dark cloud."

The same thing could be said for British athletics. "This has been one of the proudest weeks of my life, seeing not only Denise win but also watching British athletes who so many gold medals and looking at the happy faces among the supporters and seeing the Union Jacks flying high," said Peters.

Racing

Orpen boosts O'Brien hand

Graham Rock

THE depth of juvenile talent in Aidan O'Brien's stable was highlighted at Deauville yesterday when Orpen swept through the final furlong to beat Exeat and Golden Sica in the Group One Prix Morny.

The champion trainer of Ireland sent out Lavery to win the Heinz 37 Phoenix Stakes at Leopardstown yesterday, but was surprisingly beaten by Sir Mark Prescott's Orpen.

Closing on the front-running Geisha Girl approaching the final turn, Orpen was soon in front in the straight and under a strong drive from George Duffield proved one and a half lengths too strong for Ehadylia, who was conceding 24lb to the winner and was probably a little "rusty" according to her trainer John Cox.

"Ehadylia probably needed the run as it turned out. She came to win her race, blew up and I am not too disappointed," he pointed out. "She runs next in the Irish St. Leger."

Prescott admitted that On Call had run the race of her life. "We brought her here just to get placed in a Listed race never dreaming she would beat a dual-classic winner like Ehadylia," he said.

Walter Swinburn, who had hoped to resume riding at Deauville yesterday, has not set a date on his return. He is presently on a health farm trying to stabilise his weight. "He will come back when he is ready," said his agent Nick Jackson.

Jimmy Fortune, who will lose his retainer when Lynda Ramsden retires at the end of the season, had been linked with Robert Sangster, but the owner's son, Ben, denied any knowledge of the arrangement. "The only place I have heard anything about it is in the Press," he said.

Sadly, Robert Sangster's top-class sprinter Carmine Lake had to be put down on Saturday after breaking a leg at Manton the previous morning. Stable staff and vets had worked through the night to save last year's winner of the Prix de l'Abbaye. "We had to accept the inevitable," said Peter Chapple-Hyam. "She had a lot of problems early in her career, but came through them and justified our faith."

the Prix de Cadran in October.

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Brighton

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
2.15	Milford Ted
2.45	Brightstone
3.15	Zoffera
3.45	Indian Silver
4.15	Henry Head
4.45	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

2.15 E.R.F. MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN FILLYS' STAKES 2YO

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
2.15	Milford Ted
2.45	Brightstone
3.15	Zoffera
3.45	Indian Silver
4.15	Henry Head
4.45	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

2.45 EVENING ARBUS CLAIMING STAKES

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
2.45	Milford Ted
3.15	Brightstone
3.45	Zoffera
4.15	Indian Silver
4.45	Henry Head
4.75	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

3.15 VIRGIN EURO MAGNETICS HANDICAP

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
3.15	Milford Ted
3.45	Brightstone
4.15	Zoffera
4.45	Indian Silver
4.75	Henry Head
5.05	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

4.15 NORTHERN RACING MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES 2YO

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
4.15	Milford Ted
4.45	Brightstone
5.15	Zoffera
5.45	Indian Silver
6.15	Henry Head
6.45	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

4.45 LADDEROCKS SOUTH DOWNS HANDICAP

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
4.45	Milford Ted
5.15	Brightstone
5.45	Zoffera
6.15	Indian Silver
6.45	Henry Head
7.15	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

4.55 LADDEROCKS SOUTH DOWNS HANDICAP

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
4.55	Milford Ted
5.25	Brightstone
5.55	Zoffera
6.25	Indian Silver
6.55	Henry Head
7.25	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

5.15 LADDEROCKS SOUTH DOWNS HANDICAP

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
5.15	Milford Ted
5.45	Brightstone
6.15	Zoffera
6.45	Indian Silver
7.15	Henry Head
7.45	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

5.45 LADDEROCKS SOUTH DOWNS HANDICAP

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
5.45	Milford Ted
6.15	Brightstone
6.45	Zoffera
7.15	Indian Silver
7.45	Henry Head
8.15	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

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5.55	Milford Ted
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6.55	Zoffera
7.25	Indian Silver
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Draw: No advantage.

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Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

6.15 LADDEROCKS SOUTH DOWNS HANDICAP

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
6.15	Milford Ted
6.45	Brightstone
7.15	Zoffera
7.45	Indian Silver
8.15	Henry Head
8.45	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

6.45 LADDEROCKS SOUTH DOWNS HANDICAP

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
6.45	Milford Ted
7.15	Brightstone
7.45	Zoffera
8.15	Indian Silver
8.45	Henry Head
9.15	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

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GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
6.55	Milford Ted
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8.25	Indian Silver
8.55	Henry Head
9.25	Sly Road

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Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.15 Just For You, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer, 4.45 Midsomer.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J, jumps.

7.15 LADDEROCKS SOUTH DOWNS HANDICAP

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
7.15	Milford Ted
7.45	Brightstone
8.15	Zoffera
8.45	Indian Silver
9.15	Henry Head
9.45	Sly Road

U-shaped left-handed course of 11m with 320 nm-h. Sharp and undulating. Going: Firm. * Denotes blunders. * Top form rating.

Draw: No advantage.

Seven day winners: 3.45 Alton; 4.45 Sly Road.

Blunders: First time 2.

PARTING SHOT

Behind the wire... the Irish team watch play during the first European Championship at Brunel University in Uxbridge. The sport is a mixed game in which the ball is lobbed rather than hurled

Photograph by Martin Gwyn



Talk shows conspicuous by a lack of absence

SCREEN BREAK

Martin Kellner

SPURS are a riddle wrapped in an enigma shrouded in mystery. How can a team fielding talented players like Ginola, Campbell, Anderson and Ferdinand continue to perform so wretchedly?

Mark Lawrenson on Match of the Day was so confused that he described their problems somewhat metaphorically to a "conspicuous lack of absence at the back of the defence".

Lawrenson was not alone in coming up with intriguing solutions to the conundrum. Spurs are the subject of such endless speculation in the media that their fans have been given their own phone-in

'I was sitting just a few feet away from David Platt during the World Cup. He is a really nice fellow, but he's mad'

programmes. Richard Littlejohn on Radio 5 Live on Wednesday nights, and Danny Kelly, another lifelong supporter, on Talk Radio's Saturday phone-in.

Kelly, egged on by co-host Danny Baker, appeared incandescent with anger — in as much as that is discernible on the radio — as he discussed the team's lack of success. "I was sitting just a few feet away from David Platt during the World Cup," he said. "He's a nice fellow, but he's mad; certainly, eye-spinningly mad," which sounded a bit rich to me on a programme that was urging Spurs fans to lay siege to the ground.

"It is time the worm turned," said Baker. "It is time to say, 'this far and no further'."

Fredricably, quarter of an hour of ranting from Baker and Kelly resulted in a dribble of barely coherent calls. Far more productive was Baker's discussion of track and field injuries. "Have you ever been hit on the head by a shot put or a discus?" he asked. Given the nature of most of the callers to Talk Radio, Baker seemed to be a fairly safe ground here. If not a shot put or a discus, something surely. Sure enough, within seconds the

calls started coming: "Hello, I'm Jonathan and I got hit on the head by a crossbar."

At least Baker and Kelly can be original, funny and engaging, though — adjectives not likely to be used lightly of their Radio 5 Live rival, David Mellor.

The subject of who exactly got hit on the head by what leads almost inevitably to Sky's Super League commentators, Eddie and Steve, whose eye-spinnings on Friday were entirely justified by one of the misses of the season, referee Stuart Cummings's failure to spot the obvious lack of absence of the Wigan forward Mick Cassidy's elbow from the face of Leeds's Adrian Morley.

This was rugby league, as some of us still quaintly refer to it, turned rollerball: a forward travelling at full tilt pole-axed, cartoon-style, by a blow to the head. Even allowing for Steve's talent for hyperbole, it was hard to diverge from the view that this was one of the most violent incidents seen on a rugby field. His sub-text that the standard of refereeing has not kept up with the pace and intensity of the modern game also seemed spot-on.

The earnest discussion between referee and linesman, to which we are now privy thanks to Sky's microphones, seemed to belong to another era. As they discussed whether Cassidy should be placed on report, the video evidence we were watching clearly indicated that the player had no right to remain on the field.

Interestingly, a new ruling in Super League allows referees to communicate by radio with the video referee in the stands, but still forbids them to look at the big screen. The logic of that seems a little muzzy to me. There is nothing to stop the players looking at the big screen, though, and I am prepared to bet that he has to some extent been looking at it since he was first hit by the ball.

"I don't know what music they will be playing, but this is the black-and-blue brothers," said Steve. Richly entertaining though Sky's rugby league coverage is, the sport suffers through its absence from terrestrial TV for great chunks of the year, which we had always supposed was due to the BBC's shortage of funds. Clearly not, since this week the Corporation replays of the joint find £2.5 million to pick up Vanessa Feltz's contract — possibly in a bid to stimulate sales of widescreen televisions.

I am prepared to concede that Feltz's tar is marginally more authentic than that of Robert Kilroy-Silk, and that she is quite skilled at cooking a sympathetic ear to the blubbing inadequates who come on daytime TV to confess they slept with the wife's grandmother. But it still makes my eyes spin to have my money diverted without my consent from top-class live sport to the pocket of a performer whose main quality seems to be a conspicuous lack of absence.

Weekend results

RUGBY UNION

IRISH NATIONAL CUP	29	Australia	29
IRISH NATIONAL CUP	29	Australia	29
IRISH NATIONAL CUP	29	Australia	29

WELSH NATIONAL CUP

IRISH NATIONAL CUP	29	Australia	29
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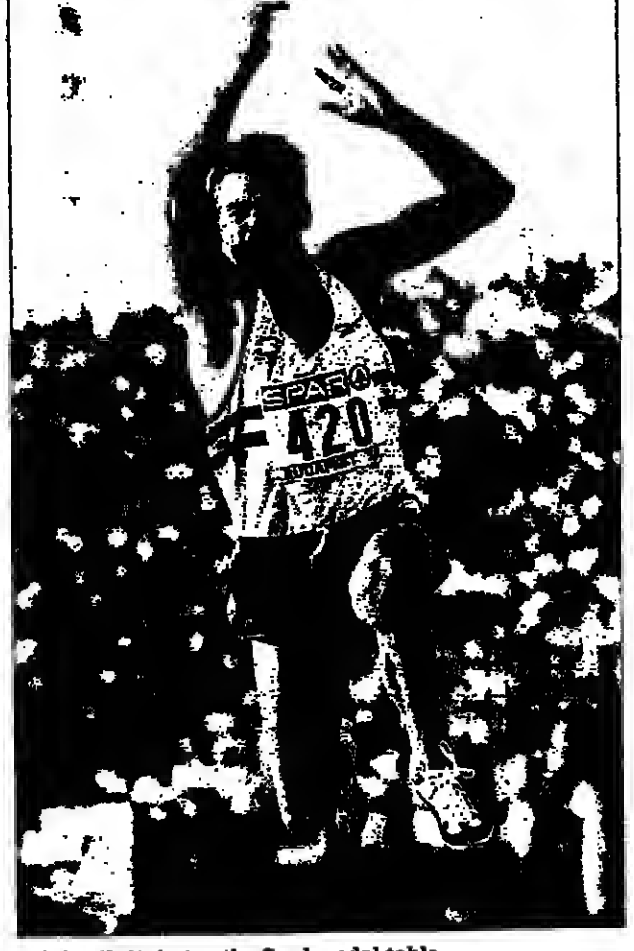
ACADEMY: Championship results

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ACADEMY: Championship results

A Sanchez Vicensio (Sp) bt C Martinec
(Sp) 6-3 5-4; **W Sales** (US) bt A Huber
(Ger) 6-3 5-4; **J Novotna** (Cz Rep) bt
M Serna (Sp) 6-3 5-1-6-1. **Semi-finals**
Sanchez Vicensio bt **Novotna** 4-6 7-6
6-2; **Sales** bt **Hingis** 4-6 6-3 5-1. **Finals**
Sales bt **Sanchez Vicensio** 6-3 5-2.
GERBANK TOUR (Havant): **Finals**

Triple gold crowns a perfect weekend



Golden boys... Steve Backley in the javelin, the last 4x400 metres relay man Mark Richardson and the triple jumper Jonathan Edwards were all victorious in Budapest yesterday, helping Britain top the final medal table

Life below stairs



Big man for a big job... Neville Southall stands guard for Doncaster Rovers during their first win for his player-manager pal Ian Snodin on Saturday

PHOTOGRAPHS: STEVE FORREST

Medals rush puts Britain on top

Duncan Mackay in Budapest sees the superpowers left in the shade

BY THE end of the European Championships in the Nag Stadium last night there were so many British athletes running round the track on laps of honour that they were colliding with one another, and the band played God Save The Queen so often that they were able to throw away the music.

Gold medals for Jonathan Edwards in the triple jump, Steve Backley in the javelin and the men's 4x400 metres relay team brought the total to nine, it left Britain proudly on top of the medal tables for the first time as traditional superpowers such as Germany and Russia were left floundering in their wake.

Backley was the first to claim gold when he won the javelin to join Linford Christie and Colin Jackson as the only Britons to win his event on three consecutive occasions.

The 29-year-old Kent thrower effectively killed the competition stone dead with his first effort which arched out to 89.72 metres, beating the championship record he had set in qualifying. "This was a fantastic night for British athletics," he said. "It's like turning the clock back to the glory days."

Backley's joy was complete when his training partner Mick Hill threw 86.92m in the fifth round to win the silver medal. Edwards did his competitors in the triple jump what Backley had done when, with his first effort, he leapt out to 17.94m — another championship record. He then sailed out to 17.98m with his last jump to prove he is back to the form he showed in 1995 when he won the world title and broke the world record three times. "A lot of people have doubted me this year but I proved them wrong," he said.

Britain were thought to be guaranteed at least one gold medal it was in the 4x400m relay. But they were pushed hard by a Polish quartet in a successful week. Mark Hylton and Jamie Baulch gave Britain a good start and the individual champion Iwan Thomas stretched the lead with a split of 44.3sec. Mark Richardson, so distraught after finishing only third to Thomas in the individual event, had to battle hard to hold off Robert Mackowiak, who had beaten him to the silver two days earlier, as he anchored the team home.

The women's team, who until yesterday had only the victory of Denise Lewis in the heptathlon to cheer, put the icing on a very large cake by winning a bronze medal in their 4x400m relay, a race won by Germany. Allison Curshley clinched the medal by holding off Ion Tiriac, the 400m hurdles champion, in the final few strides and fell into the

arms of her team-mates Donna Fraser, Vicky Jamison and Katharine Merry.

It left Britain with 16 medals in total, a remarkable turnaround in fortunes for a team dismissed as no-hopers 12 months ago after failing to win any gold medals in the 1996 Olympics and 1997 World Championships.

"We are on the verge of something special with these performances," said David Moorcroft, the embattled chief executive of British Athletics. "We've had one or two years when youngsters watching this sport might have thought it was in the doldrums. To win nine gold medals is mind-boggling."

Ireland also had their best championships since 1984, mainly to Sonia O'Sullivan. The 28-year-old Cobb athlete, who yesterday wore a black ribbon on her vest in tribute to the victims of Omagh, made history by becoming the first woman to win the 5,000m and 10,000m double in a major championships.

O'Sullivan used the same tactics in the 5,000m yesterday which had carried her to success over Paula Radcliffe in the 10,000m five days ear-

Final table

	G	S	B
Great Britain	9	4	3
Germany	4	7	3
Russia	0	9	7
Poland	3	2	1
Hungary	3	2	2
Ukraine	2	2	1
Italy	2	4	3
Portugal	2	3	1
Spain	2	1	4
France	2	1	1
Ireland	2	0	1
Hungary	1	1	0
Bulgaria	1	0	3
Greece	1	0	2
Estonia	1	0	0
Czech Republic	1	0	1
Finland	0	2	1
Switzerland	0	1	1
Latvia	0	1	0
Slovenia	0	1	0
Sweden	0	1	0
Belarus	0	0	2
Austria	0	0	1
Lithuania	0	0	1
Netherlands	0	0	1
Norway	0	0	1

lier. She sat on the shoulder of Romania's Gabriela Szabo, the world champion, and then launched a withering sprint in the last 120 metres to win in 15min 5.5sec.

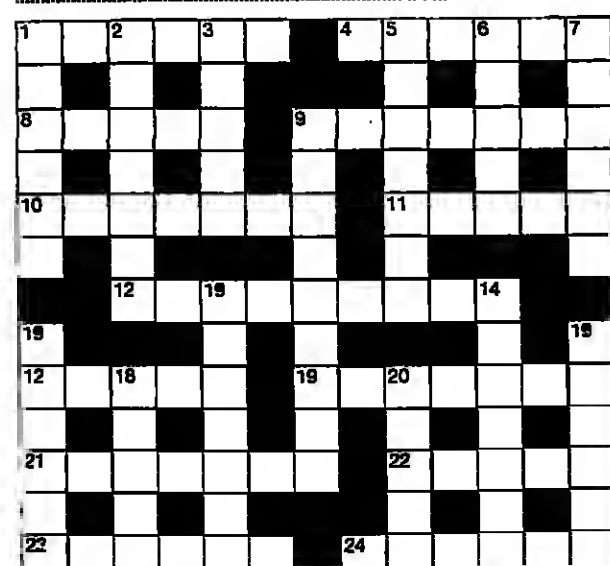
The 40,000 crowd were brought to their feet when the world record holder Wilson Kipketer sensationally finished last in the 800m. The disaffected Kenyan, running in Denmark's colours, folded down the home straight after covering the first lap inside 50 seconds. As his legs buckled, Germany's 20-year-old Nils Schumann sprinted past to win in 1:44.89 and Kipketer gave up.

The fastest finisher was James McIlroy, the youngest from Larne who represents Ireland. He finished fourth in 1:45.46 after being off the fast early pace.

The Germans won three gold medals on this final day, the bravest being Damian Kallab's in the 3,000m steeplechase despite slipping on the final water jump.

Lewis triumphs, page 22

Quick Crossword No. 8834



Across

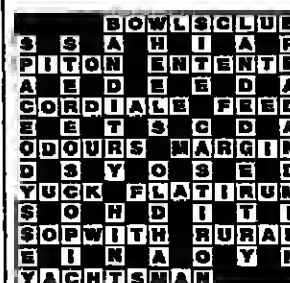
- 1 Command (5)
- 4 Spirits — showing knees (5)
- 8 Mistake (5)
- 9 Lasting (7)
- 10 Tool (3+1-3)
- 11 Bury (5)
- 12 Newspapers' (5,4)
- 17 Large fruit (5)
- 19 Officer — not specialised (7)
- 21 Make use of — bold deed (7)
- 22 Stimulate — increase (5)
- 23 Suburb with film studio (5)
- 24 Mend (5)

Down

- 1 Infringement — gap (5)
- 2 Solid roof of car (7)
- 3 Discard — fight (5)
- 5 Essex port (7)
- 6 Automaton (5)
- 7 Fortified wine (5)
- 8 Utterly — blunt (5)
- 13 Card game (bridge) (7)

14 Frame for climbing plants (7)

- 15 Measure of current (5)
- 16 Northern Ireland (5)
- 18 Flap on coat (5)
- 20 Generous (5)



Solution No. 8834

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Dereliction fails to deter Donny

Jeremy Alexander visits Belle Vue for a taste of triumph and cheese and onion in a 1-0 Conference win over Kidderminster

CHAMPAGNE was opened in the Doncaster dressing-room on Saturday and, if the sandwiches were Tesco's cheese and onion, that was appropriate too. This was a fine-cellar victory, Rovers' first since April 4, first in the Conference, first since the owners from hell were banished, first for the old Donny boy and new player-manager Ian Snodin.

Three months ago Doncaster, 118 years old, looked in danger of becoming a former football club in a former county, having dropped

out of the league by 15 points.

Now the daubed dereliction of Belle Vue, corrugated and barbed, is smiling with hope, relief, the fondness of fans, and joy confined only by the suspicion, gradually receding, that the new lot, Westferry (a development company based in the Isle of Man), might be tainted with the old lot.

The new chairman is John Ryan, multimillionaire and 40 years a fan, who has made his fortune in cosmetic surgery. His company, Transform, helped to bring Melinda Messenger to

prominence, and if he can take the club forward as far and as fast they will be in the Premiership in 2002.

There is promise of a new stadium as part of the nearby leisure park, which means Asda, adjoining, may get its expansion wish. The local council owns all the land.

Belle Vue, evocative as a neglected graveyard, is beyond salvage and would hardly qualify for the league, evidence of the iniquity of that body's double standards on grounds: one for their own, another for word-of-mouth newcomers, as was discovered by Kidderminster, Conference winners in 1994.

It is as nothing, though, to the problems caused at Doncaster by the club's previous controllers, led by Ken Richardson, a waste-paper merchant.

His six years in charge also included a fire in the main stand in June 1995, in connection with which he will stand trial next year on charges of conspiracy to commit arson, which he denies.

Either notices, produced by Friends of Doncaster Rovers FC, are still on the dilapidated walls: "Doncaster Rovers destroyed by one man and his dog" and "Weaver out or die", a separate graffiti identifying the dog. Mark Weaver was general manager, then manager when an axe else would do the job under Richardson's interference.

They used 45 players last season and Dobbin was one of the serious ones. With wages and training uncertain, they ended up whistling down supermarket aisles. No wonder Saturday's mascot chose the substitute Lee Warren as his favourite player: he was the only decent one left.

Strictly Snodin, appointed a fortnight before the opening match, inherited five. For the first match, at

Dover, he picked one up at Watford Gap. For the second, at home to Southport and also lost 1-0, he had his old Everton mate Neville Southall in goal.

The crowd, averaging 1,715 last season, more than doubled. They finished both games with 10 men. A notice above the showers says: "Keep fighting."

They fought like mad on Saturday, making up for unfamiliarity with revivalist spirit. Kidderminster had the red card, Paul Webb for serious foul play, and Rovers' captain Shaun Goodwin converted a penalty after Stuart Brock, naturally in black and white, brought down Tommy Wright. Southall wore Stoke socks — he was never dress-conscious — the rest plain red shirts, relieved of "East Riding Socks", a Richardson company.

Southall, 40 next month and more barrage balloon even than shuffling bear, is happy to play on a match-by-match basis while coaching at Tranmere and Huddersfield. He dropped sharply to his right to deny Ian Arnold in a one-on-one. The crowd loved his firm, late catch of a free-kick.

"I've had a nice welcome," he said. "The crowd and commitment are terrific. I'll take Snowy a month to get what he wants but he's working on the shape." That is the shape of the team, not the goalkeeper.

Most of Snodin's recruits have come from Yorkshire Third Division clubs. "Now we've got going, people are ringing to offer their services. But, with so many new faces, that was like our third pre-season friendly."

Heaven help the Conference when they play in earnest. Heaven, it seems, is at last helping Doncaster. As a steward, 32 years a supporter, said: "The poison's been drawn." That in itself merited champagne.



Pulling his weight... Southall called into acrobatic action

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